THE COMMONWEAL

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THE VOICE OF THE PROPHET

IT IS plain as day that the world's moral energy, served primarily by philosophers, educators and religious authorities, is battling resolutely with the problem of disastrous war. Indeed this problem has given the "corporation of clerks," to use a good mediaeval phrase far too completely forgotten, a fine chance to reaffirm its position. Practically everybody has grown enthusiastic over the triumphs of the "practical" man. A reference to victory over disease or to plumbing, applied electricity and the Ford car, is quite sufficient to clinch any argument about the value of action as opposed to speculation. But there is one field in which the "practical" man has signally failed—the realm of international law or morality. That this is a most important domain of human existence nobody will deny. In so far as the public thinks at all, it is convinced that repetitions of such catastrophes as the world war are not merely undesirable but criminally wrong. Nevertheless all see that statesmen, however shrewd, that men of action, however agressive, have done very little to prevent such a repetition. Indeed, they often appear to take very little interest in the matter. Their public pronouncements frequently toy with the view that conflict is unavoidable and—that a bigger aircraft force is indispensable.

After 1916, the modern world listened as it never did before to the counsels of moral authority. It heard the Papacy bespeaking charity among men, urging upon statesmen those great rules of contractual integrity that underlie one group's faith in another, and calling attention to the necessity for a better program of action than that which has made treaties "scraps of paper" and all men servants of war. It listened also to many other proponents of morality—to churchmen and philosophers, to poets and social reformers. And then, for a time, it succeeded in getting its men of affairs to take some action. The League of Nations began, at least, with a vote of confidence. But since that time very little has been accomplished. By comparison with achievement in the sphere of international morality, the progress of nationalistic anarchy is strikingly large. This progress is visible not only in the bluster of Mussolini, the propaganda of the Soviets and the isolation of the United States. It is as clear as day even in the deliberations of the League itself. Are we not informed that the report of the white slave traffic, which required a vast amount of hard work, was suppressed because the "feelings" of certain nations had been hurt? Do we not see in the record of discussions about disarmament a manifest unwillingness to sacrifice one jot or tittle of "position" or precedent for the sake of human welfare?

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In the American world, matters are not a whit better. For example, this journal has from time to time expressed the opinion that a union of American peoples, fashioned after the pattern of the European League, would repress dangerous tendencies to conflict and would build up throughout the twin continents a decent respect for law and agreements entered into on the basis of law. Modestly put forward though this proposal was, it has been severely criticized by men of practical experience in affairs on the ground that the United States "cannot understand the Latin mind." These men, indeed, argue that the "Latin mind" is unintelligible from our point of view; that it holds to other standards of morality and diplomatic conduct; and that an agreement to discuss matters with it across a table would prove fatal. The only way out is to uphold Washington in its determination to promote the United States point of view, cost what it may. One concedes that there is something to be said for these opinions. The mere fact that they are held by experienced and honest men is an argument in their favor. But we cannot forget, we must not forget, that failure to try to reach a mutual understanding is wrong. A resolution to push one's own interests regardless of others is wrong. Recourse to war when other means might have succeeded is wrong. And it will never do to advocate the immoral. We may fail in achieving the good, but we are hopelessly lost if we commit ourselves to doing evil.

The Capper resolution, which petitioned Congress to underwrite a treaty with France outlawing war between the two countries, is a case in point. Debating the matter in New York City, the other day, Dr. Nicholas Murray Butler and Mr. Walter Scott Penfield clearly revealed the differences of spirit that exist between the "corporation of clerks" and the crowd of practical men. The first contended that a treaty like the one under discussion offered the nation a chance to carry out its professed desire to promote international welfare. The second contended that the treaty conflicted with the wording of the Constitution, which reserves to Congress the right to declare war in spite of existing agreements. In other words, Dr. Butler advocated doing something salutary; and Mr. Penfield countered by saying that we might find this "something" embarrassing later on. We believe that the great majority of the people are behind Dr. Butler's enthusiasm for work done on behalf of peace. The trouble is, they do not understand the practical method by which he advocates doing this work. And therefore they will hesitate to push the proposal so long as the statesmen to whom they look for advice concerning practicability dubiously shake their heads. It is now, from one point of view, easier to express opinions at variance with those held by the rulers in power than it was, say, in the sixteenth century. From another point of view, however, it is more difficult: the fixing of responsibility is practically impossible.

It looks as if the custodians of the public conscience —religious authorities, philosophers, jurists, thinking individuals—must, for the time being, content themselves with keeping alive the sense of right. If they continue to declare that such and such a form of national action is wrong, that such and such a concept of patriotism is untenable, they will sooner or later compel governments to think of morality as well as expediency. They will render it impossible for statesmen to escape facing an indictment whenever they sin against the great rules of order. From this point of view it is conceivable that a triumphant attack can be waged against the root evil of modern community action—the resolve to disregard the rights of others—which has its origin precisely in the willingness of nineteenth-century and earlier moralists to flatter the chauvinist. It is a man-sized job to rid the world of that counsel to be egotistical which came from scores of respected silver tongues, clergymen included. We shall some day concede that Aquinas was right when he declared that one can rightfully engage in no war one does not consider just. We shall also concede that Pope Pius is right in talking of contemporary international action in these terms: "Many are intent on exploiting their neighbors solely for the purpose of enjoying more fully and on a larger scale the goods of this world." Having learned these things, we may still hurrah for imperialism and similar forms of nationalistic greed, but in the midst of our shouting a still, small voice will say that we are moral fools.

The campaign thus briefly outlined, must, of course, purge its own program of errors. Nothing has done more harm to the cause of peace than a series of puerile pacifists who preach the error that all wars are wrong. They can sometimes win popular support because they flatter indolence and unwillingness to bear arms. But if they got ten thousand times as much applause, they would still be rediculously wrong. The point in 1914 was not whether France should fight, but whether France was right in fighting. And the ethical chaos of a man like Romain Rolland was revealed by the fact that he conceded the second point but denied the first. Our work to outlaw war can have no better text than this declaration by Saint Augustine: "What accusation does one bring against war? Is it that in battle men are killed, who must all die some day? To utter such a reproach is becoming to cowardly men, not to such as are religious. What one rightly blames in war is this: the desire to injure, an implacable spirit, the fury of reprisals, the passion to dominate." Standing by this text, the advocates of international morality are immune to defeat. They may not succeed in convincing the world of practical affairs, or in uprooting passion from the heart of man. But gradually it will be found that the people stand with them, for the people have a habit of knowing good from evil. And in this day and age, regardless of all that may be said, a people is really formidable when it harkens to the voice of a prophet.

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WEEK BY WEEK

IN HIS message to Congress, the President dealt with some thirty-four major topics. But nothing he said regarding any of them was nearly so startling, if we can judge by press comment, as the ninety-five words of renouncement he added later on during the day to the twelve uttered in South Dakota. Mr. Coolidge is out of the presidential race. Nothing proves this more clearly than his address to Congress, which is entirely an omen of the platform soon to be. The party has been committed to no single innovation. It remains dedicated to that same golden mean which has been its fortune since the accession of Mr. Coolidge. Anybody who wishes to see how a conservative theory of economics measures up to the demands of the hour has only to take up this message and read it carefully. The underlying conviction is that government exists to afford protection—a conviction which has abided since Adam Smith and his friends first expressed it so cogently. Mr. Coolidge advocates "constructive economy," believes that the government should take no more than is necessary from the people in the form of taxes, and affirms that "keeping the credit of the nation high is a tremendously profitable operation." He wants military forces sufficient to defend a "large population and the greatest treasure ever bestowed upon any people." He swears by the tariff as a means of protection, and feels that the farmer is safest when "standing on his own foundation." He is sure that a reputation "for doing what is right" will ward off the animosities and machinations of other, less fortunate nations.

CONSONANT with this general theoretical point of view are the conclusions expressed regarding such matters as farm relief, flood control, the disposition of Muscle Shoals and the conduct of the merchant marine. In each case the President believes that the government ought to do only so much as is demanded by its protective functions. The government, for instance, "is not an insurer of its citizens against the hazards of the elements." Likewise "it is impossible to provide by law for an assured success and prosperity for all those who engage in farming." In the case of the merchant marine, "public operation is not a success." The important matter of railroad consolidation is "purely a business question." Recent experience in the domain of international affairs is held to have shown that "while having a due regard for our own affairs, the protection of our own rights, and the advancement of our own people, we can afford to be liberal toward others." Muscle Shoals should be got rid of, provided the revenues obtained can be applied to the development of fertilizer. On every one of these heads the answer is absolutely orthodox, speaking from the economic point of view. Farmers and flood sufferers may, for reasons of their own, dislike orthodoxy. Yet it is extremely doubtful that they and others can coalesce behind any program of liberal opposition calculated to win the whole-hearted support of the large majority of American citizens.

WHEN the Catholic Association for International Peace was first organized, few hoped that it could do more than follow the lead which others had given. Now it is apparent, however, that when the Association next meets, it will present a comprehensive codification of principles and experience that will be of the greatest importance in the whole discussion. The executive committee affirms that statements regarding international ethic and peace methods are now practically ready, and that progress has been made, under the leadership of Professor Parker T. Moon, toward preparing a report on the causes of war. This varied material will, it is hoped, ultimately be published in book form, thus supplying a solid basis in theory for whatever practical work can follow. Such work has also not been neglected. Various investigations of actual conditions prevailing in the diplomatic world with which the United States is in immediate contact are being conducted under the direction of trained men. One is confident that the Association has not only come to grips with the difficult subject-matter of peace and war, but that it is destined to awaken among American Catholics an answering cry to the plea for international charity which has been voiced so often by the Holy See.

TO THE credit of New York State and City it may be said that they have dealt with the problem of crime more sensibly and successfully than any other portion of the country exposed to approximately the same

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conditions. Between Coney Island and the Bronx there is now no clique of gangsters who can, either literally or figuratively, get away with murder. At the same time competent people have been busy studying the motor impulses behind those "waves" of wrong-doing which terrify the citizenry. The Baumes commission on the one hand, the Cooley report on the other—these are the twin paths down which pertinent action has gone with results already apparent. No one would contend, however, that the maximum of efficiency has been attained. And so Governor Smith's proposal to the State Crime Commission, that convicted felons be examined by competent men with a view toward determining what treatment should be meted out to them, can be accepted thoughtfully as a plan for doing better work than is possible at present. The idea has the advantage of rationalizing, to some extent at least, the activities of the parole board. In opposition to it one may say, however, that the scheme may be going too far. So thorough a revision of the present system must not be undertaken until there has been time for ample discussion.

AS SUCCESSIVE sections of our territory make up their mind upon the failure of the Eighteenth Amendment, there is some danger that the topic may fall out of public interest, thereby affording color to the arguments of the dry bloc (seldom reinforced by more convincing evidence) that its object has been accomplished. The conversion of a leading newspaper in the South to the cause of moderation not only deserves all the publicity it can get, but is valuable evidence of the extent to which indignation over this attempt to reverse national habits is growing. The Herald, of El Paso, Texas, is a journal which has till now advocated strict enforcement of prohibition. In a recent issue it devotes the main editorial to announcing its change of heart and to giving the reasons for it. We offer the quotation textually, merely remarking that it seems to us an extremely temperate statement of views which many who hate intemperance of every kind are not ashamed to share.

"REPEAL of the Eighteenth Amendment is urged on the broad grounds of public necessity. Continuance in the present way, with no hope of procuring popular consent to national prohibition or equitable enforcement of any national law regarding it, is the worst menace to public order, domestic peace and the general welfare that has appeared since attempt was made to destroy the union of states. Repeal of the Eighteenth Amendment is urged in behalf of temperance. Every church, temperance society and social body will serve the ends of religion, temperance and morality by joining in the demand for its repeal. Repeal is urged in behalf of common honesty. Millions of men and women today are aiding and abetting crime, who would not think of committing a petty misdemeanor." It only remains to add that a remedy is sought by the El Paso organ not through referendum or any attempt to re-amend the amended Constitution, but through a restoration of the states rights which Volsteadism has sought to filch away, and that the Herald is warmly congratulated on its stand by its fellow-journal, the El Paso Times.

"A PENITENT and Puzzled Parson," is the title which Bishop Charles Fiske, of the Episcopal Church, applies to himself in an article contributed to the December Scribner's. "An expert diagnostician would probably declare that my grave state of health is due to the fact that I have been too frequently exposed to the contagion of executive secretaries," the author declares, going on then to examine the "malady of uplift" to which so much of organized Christianity in this country has succumbed. To this he objects primarily not because it has made a host of people as angry as wasps, but because he wonders whether "the social movement and the uplift in general have not become, among Protestants, a substitute for devotion." He (rather cynically, perhaps) wonders how many ministers who have got tired rounding up their congregations "have trailed through Russia and Europe to the near East." Indeed he even avers that many of what might be termed buck privates in the army of benevolence are "actually engaged in propagating the largest of modern organizations, the Great Society of the Outstretched Hand." The Bishop ends by voicing a "prayer for the church that it may escape the perils of the professional uplift, and learn that there is a way we may do our proper work and yet set forth a social gospel."

SOME of the points raised by this article are of the greatest interest to Catholics. The Bishop is kind enough to declare that in welfare work, in so far as it concerns religious activities, the "Roman Catholics know exactly where they stand and what they want to do and how." This is relatively true; and since our author himself referred to the matter of that "supreme contempt for the Y. M. C. A. which the doughboy expressed in language of a varied and picturesque and racy richness," it may be well to use this as a point of contact. Does anybody know why the army hated Y men, admired the K of C's and adored the Salvation Army lassies? The reason was simply that the two last-named organizations had sense enough to leave the clergy on its regular beat. It could be proved, we think, that where the Y kept its small-town ministers out of the game, it succeeded excellently. For the most part, however, it didn't; and the result was that the everlasting unction froze everyone's blood. This part of human history, like all the rest, shows clearly what happens when the clergy try to do things for which they were not intended. One of these things is certainly "putting over" laws on this country. We as a people detest this kind of lobbying more than any other and develop a bitter grudge

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against those who engage in it; and we as Catholics would also sincerely deplore any effort on the part of our own priests to engage in the same enterprise.

THE announcement by Tammany Hall of its proposed removal from the historic place that Boss Tweed built for it on East Fourteenth Street to some unidentified spot uptown has provoked what might have been expected, a number of vitriolic comments on Tammany's past. In the sage-brush states, and even further east, Tammany has horns and hoofs. In New York itself there was printed not long ago a series of articles showing that, from Aaron Burr to Murphy, the organization had been consistently criminal and an inexplicable wart on American history. The truth is that, except for a few periods of extraordinary rottenness, Tammany has been no better and no worse than most other machine organizations; never so bad, even in Tweed's day, as Terre Haute was a short time ago, and seldom so good as Tom Taggart's Indianapolis machine. The word "Tammany" has become international, and in translating a Spanish book into English, Joseph McCabe, of London, used it in place of the word "caciquismo" because, he said, English readers would not understand the Spanish word and would understand the Yankee one. It has become a synonym for ruthless government, but the stigma is undeserved. Philadelphia and Pittsburgh have been run by caciquismos harder and more cruel than New York's. Furthermore, the idea that Tammany has been in unremitting control of New York is unhistorical. It has never happened except when Tweed and Croker were in control that Tammany ran the city; and the reigns of both were very short. Kelly and Murphy bossed Tammany longer than any other rulers, but never had the city entirely in their control. It is just as well to keep one's history straight.

WE RECOMMEND to the attention of our readers an organization which has chosen "Approved Workmen" for its name. Organized in Brooklyn, New York, as an association of Catholic laymen for the purpose of furthering the work done at the lay retreats, it now aspires to enlist more members and to spread into other cities. Briefly stated, the purposes entertained are these: to promote the study of ecclesiastical doctrine, history and liturgy according to approved methods; to educate its members spiritually, thus offsetting the inroads made by prevalent materialistic conceptions of life; and to lead the way toward those efficacious retreats of the spirit in which the fruit that is to ripen in the next world may grow. We are informed that the organization has the support and approval of the local clergy, and that it has no political or social object over and above the desire to "foster intimate personal faith and rectitude." There is every reason why many should be interested in such a program. Information can be secured from Mr. William J. Townsend, 2109 Avenue T, Brooklyn, New York. We find it expedient to add that possible groups in distant places interested in forming such an organization might do well to enlist in advance the support and approval of their pastors.

READERS of our more "popular" magazines are used by now to seeing interspersed through the back pages half-tones of tense and joyless faces, generally headed with so universal a caption as "Wanted More Money" and with a legend detailing the appreciable sums collected by some youth or maiden who has pushed the subscription sales of the weekly or monthly in question in his or her home town or district. An article written by Thomas Minehan in the current number of the Survey lets the public into some of the abuses connected with the system when it is stretched to draw schools and school children into the maelstrom of salesmanship to date. The writer does not spare his censure. Heading his article Fagin Schools, he charges that the benefits, other than to smart brains that have thought it out in "conference," are illusory, and that some of the arts used are "every bit as reprehensible as outright stealing."

LIKE so many of the slick enterprises that go to swell the volume of national prosperity, the scheme is built upon some knowledge of psychology, and on the tested principle of getting a great deal for nothing. "From previous experience," says Mr. Minehan, "the subscription men know that any appeal coming from the schools or the school children would find the people particularly responsive. . . . Having secured the consent of the school authorities by promising the school a generous sub-commission on all sales, they obtain the services of the children for nothing by making the getting of the subscriptions a matter of loyalty and school spirit." What is far worse, if Mr. Minehan's information is to be relied on, the precocious little go-getters, in order to obtain a first hearing, are taught to use all the tricks associated with a house-to-house canvass, including deliberate misrepresentation of their errand. "They are taught that boldness and lying may be used for financial gain. They are shown how the unscrupulous may take advantage of some of the better phases of human nature." Friends of childhood have been busy lately pointing out that the meaner lessons history has to teach should be spared the immature mind. We think the truce might well be extended to include the meaner side of commercial effort, and that character should not be warped at the very time it is being formed. From this point of view alone, Mr. Minehan's article strikes us as thoroughly called for and timely.

IN THE course of the recent Lamartine festivities, Albert Thibaudet a noted French critic, relates an anecdote of unusual interest. "We stopped to place flowers on the grave of the Abbè Dumont, who as all

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know is the original of Lamartine's Jocelyn and whose grave the poet erected and adorned with an epitaph of his own composition," M. Thibaudet says. "About thirty years ago, M. Maritain, a propertied citizen who was also an official in the service of the government, demanded that the community restore this tombstone which was then in a bad condition. The municipal council, however, held that both the Abbè and the poet had been clerically minded, and that the town ought not to dispense its sous on any but laicist projects. M. Maritain then personally bore the expense, and chronicled the incident in a volume of memoirs issued by the Academy of Mâcon. He was, it is worthy of note, the father of the man who is now the celebrated, Thomistic philosopher." The whole affair is probably a coincidence; but it is not altogether outside the range of probability to suppose that in the spiritual adventure which brought Jacques Maritain from unbelief to the chair of scholastic philosophy in Paris, the grave of the Abbé Dumont may have played some part.

THE USES OF UGLINESS

IT IS not only those of us whose critical faculty in matters cultural was formed during the two or three decades preceding the war, who find ourselves slightly disorientated when facing the contemporary phase of art. A sharp difference in intellectual age is often the result, not so much of actual years as the law which wills that judgment should be formed by environment. A cultural map attempting to indicate, by some chronological device, the degrees of sophistication arrived at in these United States would present a rare jumble of ciphers. There would be those whose education in the matter of the arts, outward evidence notwithstanding, still lingers fondly and belatedly in the twilight of plush and ball fringe. There would be others, and they are more numerous than sometimes appears, who feature their repugnance to recent tendencies by a conscious return to the simpler and starker outlines of the all too brief American classical era. But, most of all, there would be disclosed a vast host upon whose cultural age no date would throw the most partial light, who have had no speaking acquaintance with the outworn fashions they are bidden discard, and whose sole concern is to range themselves with the pioneers who most vociferously proclaim they are in the vanguard of the aesthetic procession.

The contemporary cult of ugliness is a case in point. It would be interesting, for instance, to know how many of those who are trooping to the galleries in Fifty-Seventh Street to gaze soulfully upon the work of that master of distortion, Jacob Epstein, and striving to read into the haggard faces, leprous cheeks and scrannel necks of his luckless models, some motive that shall set them in the authentic line of portraiture in three proportions, are sincere in their admiration, how many are merely registering their complete receptiveness to the new afflatus, and how many are merely curious and condescending. It would not, we think, throw any light particularly worth having upon the value of modern tendencies in art. The rules of this new creation, as that eminent critic Mr. Walter Pach has reminded us in The Masters of Modern Art, are "such as can never be written down. They are the principles perceived by the mind without the intermediation of words." One principle, however, that we seem to perceive pretty clearly behind the Epstein (and other) masterpieces, not only can be written down, but is written down so clearly that it is hard for him who runs not to read.

This may quite bluntly be termed the advertising power of disproportion. Caricature has an "arresting" quality. In homely language, its function is to give a "kick" to the visual faculty. Our eyes pass languidly over whatever reproduces for us the observed harmony of physical nature. Very much as a crowd is sure to gather around any violent disruption of discipline or decency in our streets, they stop, look and look again when confronted with anything that sets it at defiance.

How thoroughly this arresting attribute of the ugly is understood by those who are concerned with salesmanship cannot escape the most careless observer upon whose eyes the covers of our magazines, the jackets of our "serious" novels and the displays that are aimed at the more class-conscious customer, are forced during a walk through any large modern city. Germany would seem to have been its place of origin and the hectic ten years just before the war its period of incubation. Visitors to the Exhibition of the Arts Décoratifs held in Paris in the fall of 1910 were introduced to the decorative effect that might be secured by such devices as placing a birdlike skull above the frame of a colossus, putting a hydrocephalic head above embryonic trunk and limbs, or by merely leaving a large part of the figure blocked out in rudimentary fashion and lavishing paint or gilding upon the hands and face. What a French critic of the day termed "the cult of the incomplete" was launched.

Prophets there will always be who persist in regarding the new movement in art catastrophically and see in it a sign either of decadence or emancipation. For those who are unwilling to place it in what we still consider a comforting perspective the words of Mr. Anthony M. Ludovici, in his recent Man: An Indictment, may suggest a thought: "To mistake the bulk of the 'expressive' or 'protesting' output in the sphere of art as a good sign, or as a proof of national riches, instead as of as a sign of exhaustion and nervous fatigue, is the repeated error of modern criticism as also of modern public opinion. We should require almost a century of silence to recover from all this 'expression of selves' and to begin again to produce a desirable art."

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THAT CHRISTMAS MAY BE CHRISTIAN

By MARK O. SHRIVER

EVERY year, just about the time of the winter solstice, a queer sort of oppression overwhelms me. There is a strange feeling that things are not exactly as they should be. Christmas is coming, and yet the trafficking and bartering on which so many are bent leap out at me as, so it would seem, the one prime factor in the minds and hearts of a majority of my fellowmen. Perhaps one cause of it all is that my own boyhood Christmases were so utterly different from those of the great majority of present-day city-breds, and of country-breds too, for the matter of that.

These holy seasons were spent far up in the hills of western Maryland amid surroundings that held a very real touch of the Catholic Christmas of tradition. Everything began for us on Christmas eve with the gathering of the clan, and a preparation in a very solemn way for what Christmas really is. Generally we gathered about dusk, and then, after supper, a sumptuous meal of which the memories of steaming bowls of stewed oysters fresh from the great bay will never fade, we sat and talked in the living-room before the roaring open fire. We were at peace with all the world, but before too great a weariness had settled on us we went to confession, old and young together, the failing generation and those who were to come after them and, with God's help, take their places. Followed a little more quiet talk and, slowly, one at a time a slipping away to complete the preparation of some last gift, and, of course, for those who were old enough to know, when the smaller ones had been led upstairs to bed, the dressing of a huge tree, gaily decked with the most beautiful tinsel and shining balls and bells that ever any boy had seen. There was always a "Bethlehem," a stable and a manger, and animals and shepherds and wise men and Saint Joseph and the Blessed Mother and the Babe under that tree lest the wonder of it might be too distracting and keep us from a realization of the beauty of it all, driving home a forceful lesson that, in one house at least, there would be room for Him Who was to be born again that night.

There is a chapel in that old white house which was and is today an official station of the archdiocese. Always there was a priest to hear confessions and to say the Masses very early in the morning. The call of the angels may indeed have come, as the carols tell, upon the midnight clear, but there has never seemed to me to be one-half the devotion in a midnight Mass that is found in one very early on a Christmas day while the stars are yet shining high in the heavens. It was dark when the adorers gathered for Mass in that tiny chapel of fond and sacred memory. Quietly and without ceremony, without greeting save for a smiling "Merry Christmas!" as we passed someone on a porch or in a hall, we entered and took our places. It was all so close and intimate that it seemed one might reach out and touch the priest as he vested and the smaller boys who were to be the acolytes helped him prepare for the sacrifice.

There was no great throng to make up the congregation, just sons and daughters with their husbands and wives and children, and a few of the neighboring families, for in that part of Maryland Catholics are few and far between. But all together, in humility and prayer, they knelt to worship the Infant Saviour who had been born again to them. There was space for perhaps forty in the room but the very closeness of it intensified one's intimacy with the Babe and strengthened one's devotion to Him for all the year. Everyone received Holy Communion. And when the third Mass was ended and the neighbors had gone on their way bearing a little token, clothes or money or some trifle to bring a ray of happiness to lives in which the sun shone less brightly than in our own, it seemed to me, both as a little fellow and when I grew older and could appreciate more of what things really meant, that the spirit which hovered over us and has blessed us all these years was indeed the real spirit of Christmas. There was poor old Billy, the cripple, his legs paralyzed from childhood, who had to be sent for and taken back; what a lustre shone on his face as he started to his home with the trifle that really meant for him a Merry Christmas! It was truly a celebration of the birth of the Infant Christ, a veritable coming of peace and joy.

After breakfast came the opening and the inspection of the presents. There was always the giving and receiving of gifts—something to be eagerly anticipated from one year to another. How anxiously we waited to see what we should receive! Never were children more happily remembered, never more pleased with the simple things that had been heaped upon them by those they loved and who loved them, and were bringing them to man and womanhood with a keen sense of what the beginning of wisdom really is.

Nor were the Christmas dinners to be lightly passed over. Dinners they were with none of the sanctimonious touch of the Puritan. There were cocktails and soup and turkey and ham and oysters and vegetables beyond all telling or counting, and nuts and olives and raisins and candy and plum pudding brought to the table with a thin, blue flame circling and ringing its golden head, flanking it on every side, and

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testifying to the purity and the potency of the fluid which it is forbidden in these days even to name. And then there was the long walk in the early evening as the shadows of Christmas day lengthened and night fell, to rid one of the feeling of—well—grateful and pleasing satiety.

All around lived the Pennsylvania Dutch, stolid, sullen Dunkards, who never seemed to know that Christmas was a feast of the Church, holding it rather as a time of merrymaking and hilarity, to be tolerated because of its antiquity. As the day wore on the mumers, Kriss Kringlers, as they are called, men and boys of the neighborhood costumed and disguised out of all knowing, came to the house, even as they came to as many more as could be included in the fading of an all-too-brief day. Gifts they sought, just a bit to eat perhaps, or something to drink to contribute to the joy and merriment which even their dour tenets could not entirely suppress. Later yet, as the strokes of the clock piled up and grew more numerous and as the darkness deepened and the moonlight cast its fresh, thin shadows, off we went to bed to rest and sleep, exhausted from a plenitude of happiness. If we dreamed it was of the prospect, distant indeed but oh so clear and hopeful, of other Christmases that were to come.

The keenness of the pleasure of those days is gone now for most of us. We who have lived through it and reveled in it now have homes and families of our own, far too numerous for even the expansive hospitality of the white house beneath the old hills. But we who treasure up such memories knowing what we do, have yet a stern and solemn duty weighing heavily upon our shoulders, that shrieks aloud for instant performance. There were thousands of such Christmases everywhere, of course, and while each can tell only of that which he knew and loved, we children of the nineties must see to it that our children are schooled as we have been. That Christmas is brought home to them as something very real and earnest. That, above all, the sacred, the Catholic, aspect of it is never forgotten. That in these days when every activity of the time seems centered in the material phase, in commercialism and revelry, when Christmas devotion is concentrated in one hurried Mass between a party at eleven o'clock on Christmas eve and another at half-past one on Christmas morning, that our children—that all children and all grown-ups, too—shall have something of the gladness which was ours when the Child whose birthday comes once more calls us to greet Him with the shepherds at the manger and at the altar.

FOR THE LOVE OF CHILDREN

By HARVEY WICKHAM

THE tourist who visits the church of Saint Onofrio, at the northern end of the Janiculum hill, in Rome, usually pauses on his way to the Tasso Museum (in what was once the old monastery) and gives a moment to the ancient cloister, with its primitive frescoes illustrating the life of the saint.

At a corner of the cloister he sees the iron grating of an ornamental door, but he seldom ventures to ring the bell which hangs above it. And if he be one of those who think that the prayers of faith go for nothing in this practical world, and wishes to preserve his unbelief, he does well to pass on to the examination of the relics of the poet—though even Tasso came here that he might begin his famous "conversation with the sky." For beyond the grated door lies the Ospedale del Bambin' Gesú, an institution where prayers are answered every day.

The story of the Ospedale could be called The History of the Miraculous Terracotta Jug, though no miracle is involved save the ever-recurring one of the marvelous efficiency of the love of Christ working through the hearts of men—in this case more particularly the hearts of two devoted women. The hospital, which now cares for nearly four thousand patients a year, actually sprang from a little earthenware savings-bank, of the sort we give to children to teach them to hoard their pennies.

I have seen this salvadanaio (or dindarolo, as the true Romans have it) and can testify that outwardly it looks like a perfectly ordinary jug. The grain of mustard seed which stands as the measure of the amount of faith necessary to remove mountains, was an ordinary mustard seed. But into this jug, one day in 1869, a little girl, donna Maria (now the Duchess Salviati) dropped a small coin which was far from being an ordinary coin inasmuch as it bore the sweet alloy of blessed charity. And today, though the oak beneath which Tasso meditated rises, a dead hulk, in a neighboring field, the small coin (multiplied like the five loaves and two fishes) lives as a benevolent institution of healing, under the direct patronage of the Holy See and in many respects a model of its kind for all the world.

Even in 1869 this first contribution, though its future was not as yet unfolded, already had a history dating back to the days when donna Maria's mother (the late Duchess Arabella Salviati) was herself a little girl traveling with her parents (members of the ducal house of Fitz-James) through France and Italy. At Turin she was taken to visit the Marchesa di Barolo, whose charities were famous throughout the continent, and there she saw with her own eyes how unselfish devotion to the poor could work its divine alchemy even in a country dominated by a Colbert.

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Later, when donna Arabella had become the wife of the Roman Duke, Scipione Salviati (father of the present Duchess) the impression was deepened by the reading of certain papers left by her sister-in-law, the Princess Guendalina Talbot-Borghese, who had planned a chain of children's hospitals but died before a single one could be built.

Brooding upon this unrealized project, donna Arabella became a constant visitor to such institutions as were actually in existence, and found them deplorable. In all Italy there was not a building dedicated to the special care of infancy, and in the hospital of San Giacomo she actually found two sick children occupying one bed in a ward otherwise devoted to adults. Such promiscuity was not to be borne. So she went with her troubles to the Marquis Giovanni Patrizi Montoro (better known as Nino Patrizi) who was not only a family friend but a man of the type for whom the Italians reserve the expressive word, caritatevolissimo. And together they decided that, with the blessing of God, even a little money would be enough to launch the great idea which donna Arabella had for so long treasured in her mind. There must be an institution where suffering innocence could be tended without neglect or contamination; an institution where love and religion would have their place as well as surgery and medicine. The Duke of Salviati approved. But it was a dream for millionaires, and none of them were rich. Where was the money to come from?

And here the history back of the miraculous jug ends. Donna Arabella's children, little Maria at their head, knew a great deal about faith and very little about the weight of mountains. They dropped their copper soldi into the wonderful dindarolo, and presented it with its contents to their mother on her birthday.

"Now, mamma," they cried, "you can build your hospital!"

Is it any marvel that their elders found a few spare gold pieces somehow and forthwith, and threw cold doubt to the winds? Marvel or not, the records show that on March 19, 1869, the Ospedale del Bambin' Gesú was dedicated. It contained but six beds, and on that very first day four of them were occupied.

It was but an annex to the orphanage of Saints Crescenzo and Crescentino. on the left bank of the Tiber. One physician made one daily visit. One Sister of Charity was the only nurse. But the dream had materialized, and soon the growing demands of the work forced a change of location. The beds, now increased to thirty-two, were moved to a more commodious edifice in the Via della Zoccolette, where Father Tiber immediately began to show his eternal malice by undermining the walls. In 1881, the commune of Rome, moved by the spectacle of an establishment which had grown without visible means of support until it was caring for 272 patients a year, came to the rescue with the gift of a part of the ancient and half-ruined monastery of Saint Onofrio. Here, overlooking the eternal city on the one hand and with a view of the dome of Saint Peter's on the other, the work has found its home ever since. Building has been added to building and constant improvement made in technical methods, but the ruling spirit has always remained the same.

It is the spirit of the love of children exercised in the name of the Child Divine, and finds its avatar in the person of the present Duchess of Salviati, the very donna Maria who in 1869 contributed the first copper to the magic jug. Like her mother, the foundatrix, this saint-like woman has devoted a long life-time to the single object of bringing physical, mental and spiritual salvation to the tiny victims of misfortune, poverty and disease. Her social position, which opens every door, offered her all the gaieties of the continent. She chose to work like a slave, and seldom opens a door except to beg for her charges. One may see her any day, a small, white-haired but incomparably distinguished figure in a plain black dress, moving industriously about the institution which her own heart and hands not only helped to bring into being but have sustained unfalteringly to this day.

One morning not long ago, I found her bending over the cots of six little waifs that had just been brought in almost literally from the highways and hedges.

"It is a miracle how we get on," she said. "Children who simply must be cared for find their way to us every day, and we never know where the money is coming from. We have now 375 beds, twenty-six Sisters of Charity, fifty-two trained nurses, and sixteen doctors. During national calamities like the influenza epidemic or the Sicilian earthquake, we have had as many as 400 little sufferers brought to us in a single twenty-four hours. But I never worry. It is God's affair, and he always remembers us—though sometimes it seems to be only at the very last minute."

I looked around the reception ward, where new arrivals are kept until it can be ascertained whether they are infectious cases or not, and found myself in a veritable chamber of horrors. Babies shrieking with pain, babies mutilated and wounded, infants with grotesque limbs and vacant or half-human faces. How could anybody, let alone a woman like donna Maria, laugh here, even to cheer and encourage a child?

We went upstairs to the next ward. "Buon giorno!" cried a score of piping voices. Why, everybody was laughing, nurses and children together. Yet here were just such children as I had seen below—plus a few weeks' residence in the Ospedale del Bambin' Gesú. I have visited many hospitals in many countries, but never have I seen such wonders of transformation as are being wrought in the old monastery of Saint Onofrio.

"It is the good surgeons and our good prayers," explained the Duchess, still smiling. "Even the children pray. And I tell them that their prayers are sure

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of being heard, for innocence and suffering are the two wings, are they not, which best lift our prayers to God? We have a training school for nurses, and the girls come in from the country and work hard for two years. Then we give each one a little dot to assist her in obtaining a fine husband. But very many find that their hearts have become too big to be filled by any human love, and they choose to become Sisters of Charity and to remain with us."

Then she showed me the other wards, where desperate cases were being slowly brought back to health and happiness; and the surgical department where the hospital's specialty (pediatria) is being carried on. I saw a volume containing the photographic history of horrible malformations that changed before my eyes into lines of beauty and strength. Great physicians and surgeons—Concetti, Spolverini, Marino Zuco, Bonanome, Valagussa, Mazitelli and many others—are at work here, another proof that there is no quarrel between true religion and true science.

Between operations the little convalescents are sent to recuperate at the Princess Jolanda hospital, at Santa Marinella, on the border of the Mediterranean a few miles from Rome. This annex, which continually accommodates about eighty tubercular cases, is the gift of Queen Elena of Italy.

"I always go to our good Queen when we are in trouble," said donna Maria, "and she always does what she can. But there are so many calls upon her, and Italy is not rich like your United States. But when we get our new buildings finished, this will be more like one of your wonderful American hospitals, will it not?"

We were by this time standing on a balcony surrounded by romping boys and girls—unbelievable graduates from that chamber of horrors below—overlooking a yard so littered with building materials that the Duchess had just likened the scene to "the day after an earthquake." I had seen the x-ray and other apparatus donated by the American Red Cross after the war, and the new section which is being built with the aid of Red Cross funds. I had seen the plans for the isolated cottages and the mothers' dormitory, which are to complete the institution. But I had also seen the dispensary, where the nuns were preparing medicines and packing them away in jars like housewives canning fruit. I had seen the office, so like a cottage parlor, and noted the general homeliness and lack of ostentation prevailing everywhere.

And as I thought of some of our own great hospitals, with their marble entrance-halls, their millions in equipment, the military, even mechanical precision of their operation, my thought was: "No, thank God! The Bambin' Gesú will never be like that. We must come here to learn, not to teach."

And yet, since even God had to come down to earth to make himself reachable to men, is it right that an institution like that founded by donna Arabella Salviati and maintained by the devotion of two generations of her family, should struggle on, hampered by the lack of the merely material means to give its spirit full expression?

There exist today particular reasons for asking the question. Since June 24, 1924, this hospital has been under the supreme charge of the Office of the Estates of the Holy See. It is now not only Italy's chief establishment for the care of children, it is the Pope's hospital, the world's. Every year the eyes of all Christendom will be turned more and more toward it as an example of what the Church can do, of what the Church considers a model institution of its kind. And the world, under the mistaken notion that the Church has all manner of funds for every purpose, ready and merely waiting to be spent, will be critical.

"I went to the Holy Father," donna Maria told me, "because he is the father of us all. And I laid my burden on him because I wanted to be sure that the work would be carried on after I am gone. And he kindly consented to assume the responsibility—temporarily, until some other means can be found."

And she read me from the letter in which His Holiness accepts the charge:

> Whilst We pray for the welfare of the hospital, We impart with all Our heart . . . to all who give their work to the charitable institution, the Apostolic Blessing.

Besides this letter, another treasured document, copied into the visitors' book in the parlor-like office, is one from His Holiness, Pius X, dated from the Vatican, February, 23, 1904:

> Remembering with satisfaction the visit made about twenty years ago to the Hospital of the Bambino Gesú, where We admired the loving care that was given to those infirm little ones; in the certainty that the pious institutrix has already received in heaven the reward of the pious work, We invoke the highest blessings on all the generous ones that in whatever mode remember the patience under suffering of the poor innocents, who, together with Ourselves, will not cease to implore every comfort for their benefactors.

With this for a background, and considering the fact that approximately $2,500 will permanently endow a bed, it does not seem likely that an establishment which has already cared for more than fifty thousand children will be permitted to suffer for lack of funds. Even the smallest contribution will work wonders, for there is almost no "overhead."

But the Pope's hospital, already a perfect model in its exhibition of love and sacrifice and unselfishly devoted skill, should rest on a firmer material basis, and become a model in all respects—even down to those marble corridors of which we in America are so proud. Moreover, His Holiness has openly expressed the desire that some organization like the American chapter of the Knights of Malta should furnish a permanent and adequate endowment.

Donna Maria still has boundless faith. The little jug is still unbroken. May it never be empty!

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YESTERDAY

By HELAN MAREE TOOLE

CHRISTMAS morning. "Adeste, fideles, venite adoremus Dominum." We listen to these penetrating strains while gazing at the miniature crib scene, symbolic of that glorious Bethlehem manger more than nineteen hundred years ago. The Nativity services are softly chanted. Afterward, while lingering a moment, we think how perfect it would be if once more some of the mediaeval Christmas liturgical dramas might be given as a complement to the ceremonies. Alas, we are too sophisticated today! Nevertheless there is nothing to hinder us from glancing at the international tropes and dramas of the Christmas season in yesterday's chivalric times. Every country where Catholicism flourished had them. Germany and France possess many of the extant manuscripts, all written in Church Latin. England's have disappeared—perhaps because King Henry VIII enjoyed seeing a ruined monastery rather than an active one preserving manuscripts for the future.

These dramas covering the events of the Christmas epoch were vivid, picturesque pantomimes which appealed to the amiable serenity of the mediaeval mind. The poor acoustics of the great cathedrals and sublime monastery chapels and the general ignorance of Latin made a visual, detailed representation essential for an adequate explanation of the text, since audible comprehension was almost impossible.

As the embryological stage of the Easter Visitatio Sepulchri was the trope "Quem quaeritis in sepulchro, O Christicolae?" so the "Quem quaeritis in praesepe?" of the Officium Pastorum was an attempt at a dramatic mise en scène and genuine impersonation. Professor Karl Young of Yale University, in his admirable and scholarly Study of the Dramatic Developments within the Liturgy of Christmas says:

> Having stopped short of true drama, while it remained attached to the Introit of the Magna Missa of Christmas, the trope, "Quem quaeritis in praesepe," found lodgment and eventually a true dramatic development at the end of the office of matins.

It followed its Easter ancestor and model which made a gradual and subtle transfer from the Mass to the canonical offices.

The plain simplicity of the Rouen and Clermont texts make them piquant and charming. Behind the altar is a stable with a thatched roof. Statues of the Blessed Mother and Saint Joseph, lavishly clothed, are kneeling at the side of the Divine Child hidden in the crib. A boy representing an angel announces the birth of Christ to the five canons, as shepherds, vested in tunics and amices. They advance through the chorus aisle singing, "Pax in terris totum." Two Obstetrices, clad in dalmatics, sing the question, "Quem quaeritis?" The happy Pastores respond with the "Salvatorem Christum usque angelicum." The Obstetrices draw back a curtain disclosing the Mother and Child. "Ecce Virgo!" They greet her, "Salve Virgo—" then turn to the chorus singing, "Alleluia, Alleluia! Jam vere scimus usque cum Propheta dicentes—" and quickly withdraw.

Other dramatic germs such as "Quem vidistis" and "Hodie cantandus est," played a curious but not an ineffective rôle. The Officium Pastorum did not develop in isolation but rather in union with other groups.

Obviously the Magi were the starting-point for the Officium Stellae. At Limoges it possessed the nature of a trope to be inserted at the offertory, "cantato offertorio antequam eant ad offerendum." Three choristers richly garbed in silk garments, each having a shining crown on his head and carrying a delicately carved cup filled with gifts, play the rôles of the Three Kings of the East. They walk slowly through the large choir door singing, "O quam dignis celebranda dies ista laudibus?" One of the regal trio points out the star. "Hoc signum magni regis est." As they approach the main altar a boy in the guise of an angel says that Christ, the Ruler of the world, is born. The astounded Magi hasten through the door leading to the sacristy, chanting the antiphon, "In Bethlehem natus est rex coelorum."

The naïvely carved Limoges version becomes more ornate at Rouen. The Three Kings come from diverse parts of the church, each with a veritable royal procession of servants. Their paths focus at the altar where the traveling Magi kiss one another. The cantor begins "Magi veniunt"—then narrating in beautiful, metrical phrases their visit to Jerusalem and the reception at the court of Herod. They proceed into the Gothic nave. A crown before a cross hangs like a star, ever advancing toward its goal. Men robed in dalmatics, on inquiry learn from the foreigners that they are from Tharsis, Arabia and Saba "cum muneribus adorare Dominum." When shown the newborn King the Magi present their gifts, singing, "Salve princeps saeculorum." The procession now passes through the church wing in front of the fountain, entering the choir at the left entrance. The Mass immediately follows. The Three Kings lead the choir and chant the gradual beginning, "Omnes de Saba"—.

The miniature drama from Nevers was given at the communion. The play from Compiègne adds two episodes to the previous Officium Stella. At the monastery of Fleury-sur-Loire a pretentious drama tele-

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scoping the Officium Pastorum and the Officium Stellae was presented.

The delightful Montpelier text in which the "Hodie cantandus est" plays an interesting rôle, has an admirable suggestion of a mise en scène. It was given at the end of Epiphany matins. A Vergilian echo is present, plus a would-be conglomeration of sounds—an attempted imitation of a foreign language. This ends with Herod brandishing his sword and threatening punishment to the offenders.

The Ordo Rachelis, the drama of the slaughter of the innocents and Rachel's lament, was ultimately connected with the Magi's visit at Herod's court and the Bethlehem praesepe. The possible origin of this type is given by Professor Young:

> Under the general influences that inspired the great body of liturgical poetry, arose a trope (or tropes) of the responsory "Sub altare," represented by the extant text from Limoges. Certain dramatists, wishing to carry out the implications of Herod's threats at the end of certain versions of the Officium Stellae, used such a trope as a substantial part of a text for an innocents' scene. The Ordo Rachelis thus created sometimes served as the conclusion of an Officium Stellae, as at Laon; sometimes, as at Fluery and Freising, it formed a separate and independent play. . . .

The version from the cathedral at Freising is well executed. The shepherds are moved by "Gloria in excelsis Deo," expressing awe and curiosity at the words—a curiosity which was to assume comic elements in the later cycle plays of England. As in the Officium Pastorum, they arrive at the manger. The scene changes. Saint Joseph is warned by an angel's voice—"Joseph, Joseph surge"—to flee. Mary is awakened and they start to Egypt while Joseph sings, "Aegypte noli flere." When the Nuntius informs Herod that the Magi deceived him by returning another way, he pleads that the king order their immediate capture if possible. Herod is deaf to this and commands the death of the "Rex novus." The messenger advises killing all the male children in order that the Child may not escape. The brutal slaughter is carried out through the medium of dumb shows. The crude henchman says to each dying babe, "Disce mori puer." In a remote section of the cathedral an angel joyfully sings of the successful flight of Mary and Joseph with the Infant from the ravaging sword, relieving a tense scene. Rachel's lament is very detailed. Her sorrow is expressed in leonines while the answers of her comforter are copied exactly from the sequence. The drama closes with the Te Deum, implying that it was performed at Matins on Epiphany or more presumably on Holy Innocents' day.

The most important group of Christmas plays for future development in drama was the Ordo Prophetarum. They gradually evolved, finding an encouraging impetus in the lectio, "Pseudo-Augustinian Sermo contra Iudaeos, Paganos et Arianos de Symbolo." This vitally dramatic mediaeval sermon was packed with rhetorical devices. The section directly addressed to the Jewish people was often a liturgical lectio for matins on Christmas or some other day of the Christmas season. The leader calls upon the Jews to be convinced of the Messiah's existence from the statements of their own prophets. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Moses, David and others testify. Even Vergil and the Erythean Sibyl state their proof.

Limoges's rendition of the Ordo Prophetarum eliminates the narrative and expository element of the lectio and possesses very few rubrics. At Laon a drama of the thirteenth century gives careful descriptions of gorgeous costumes, a penetrating analysis of personalities and excellent dramatic presentation. David is a vigorous, youthful figure, John Baptist wears a hairy shirt and carries a palm branch. Vergil's head is covered with ivy.

Du Meril, Chasles and Young agree that the Rouen Festum Asinorum was given on January 1. This drama included twenty-eight persons, most of the major and minor prophets. Terce concluded, the Prophetae procession leaves the cloister, walking toward the nave, while the two leading clerics sing antiphonally, the "Gloriosi et famosi." The men stop at the junction of the nave and transept between six Jews on one side and six Gentiles on the other. The vocatores urge all to rejoice in the birth of the Messiah, then address the "recalcitrant Jews" and the pharasaic Gentiles. Two independent dramatic episodes occur at this time. The first revolves around the character of Balaam. Two emissaries order Balaam to appear at King Balak's court. The prophet leaves riding on an ass and plying his spurs until the person concealed under the animal's skin begs for mercy. A youth dressed like an angel with graceful wings and an unsheathed sword blocks Balaam on the way, warning him to forget Balak. The vocatores now ask Balaam for his prophecy. The second dialogue rôle centers around Nebuchadnezzar. The elaborate mise en scène consists of a furnace made of cloth and oakum placed in the heart of the nave, and a grotesque, ornate figure represents the Biblical golden idol.

E. K. Chambers in The Mediaeval Stage treats the relation of the Laon Ordo Prophetarum and the Rouen Festum Asinorum. He believes that the liturgical plays of the Christmas season, the Officium Pastorum, the Officium Stellae, the Ordo Rachelis and the Ordo Prophetarum are the older.

> They all seem to have taken shape by the eleventh century, before there is any clear sign that the Kalends had made their way into the churches and become the Feast of Fools.

He does not hold that the

> riotous Feast of Asses was derived from the pious and instructive ceremonies, so called at Rouen. On the con-

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trary, Balaam and the ass are an interpolation in the Prophetae, both at Rouen and more obviously at Laon. Balaam, alone of the Laon performers, is not from the Pseudo-Augustinian sermon. Is he not, therefore, to be regarded as a reaction of the Feast of Fools upon the Prophetae, as an attempt to turn the established presence of the ass in the church to purposes of edification rather than of ribaldry?

The Christmas cycle proper is found when the Prophetae and Stella are joined in a single drama. Two texts are from the German, a fourteenth-century manuscript now at Saint Gall, and a play probably written by the wandering scholars from Benedictbeuren. Augustine presides over the prophecy. After a lively debate between Augustine and the Archsynagogus, the Episcopus Puerorum intervenes and the prophets retire. Then an Officium Stellae drama follows, preceded by the Annunciation, Visitation and including the Ordo Rachelis, the death of Herod, the accession of Archelaus, and finally ends with an Antichrist episode.

The transitional era led to the great cycles in the vernacular, all-inclusive in their scope. But they were performed in later spring while the older drama was rendered on the feast day which it celebrated.

We moderns have a delicate appreciation of the mediaeval Christmas drama. We praise the naïve, well-ordered minds which produced religious animated dramas. It would be charming if Catholics would revive these "petit plays" filled with cradling ease, calm equation of forces, a noble spontaneity and an ardent, enthusiastic love for Christ.

FLORENTINE HUMORESQUE

By LEON TAHCHEECHEE

WHEN the Baroness went to inquire about the house in which she had spent a good part of her life, the sir, gentleman, cavalier, commissary of confiscated properties in Florence, spoke to her in this way:

"My dear lady, we didn't start the war. The Germans started it. We have, therefore, by the rigor of custom, confiscated all properties of our declared enemies. But, my dear lady, we are always thankful to see old enmities forsaken in the hallowed name of peace and concord. We suggest, therefore, that you buy back your estate at the sacrificial price and on the generous terms that his majesty's officers shall fix upon."

She bought her villa on the eminence above the Piazza Cavour, at the end of Viccolo San Marco Vecchio, with the observatory tower on which to sit on transparent evenings and look up to Fiesole or down on Florence. But her resources were brought to such a strain by that transaction that she was forced to let living quarters to distinguished visitors from victorious countries. Colonel Babbington was one of her first guests. In deference to the universal tradition, he immediately fell in love with the mistress and became a fixture of the household. But the Baroness would not marry him.

Could you have seen him preen his fifty odd years, pull down his mustaches, drop a lock over his forehead, cross his legs, light a cigarette and fling the match away with a devil-may-care gesture, you would have thought the Baroness out of her senses.

The Colonel was distinction itself, an ornament, he and his fifty odd years. But it was not the distinction of your comme-il-faut gentlemen on the golf links at Cannes—it was the dashing, old-time gallantry. His good blood burned in him like a heady liquor; a fine madness—even rashness, perhaps, if he were taken in the wrong way. One imagined that a sword was concealed in his slender Malacca stick. What was she thinking of, that Baroness, that round-eyed and round-mouthed morsel of perfection? Did she not possess two children and a very scanty fortune?

True, the Colonel had a passion for declaiming, and his speeches were rather long, but she had two children, a very scanty fortune—no fortune at all, in fact—and was thirty-three years of age.

His foibles were of a nature calculated to endear the Baroness's children to him. He was quite sure he had been a Florentine in his former incarnation. I do not remember if he had been a "Gu-wuelph" or a "Ghi-belline," but it was one of them. Anything Florentine was dear to him and the children had both been born in Florence. There was really no reason why the Baroness should not have married him.

Colonel Babbington held that the state of wedlock was not alone the most honorable and the most hallowed by tradition, but the most blissful as well. The sweet restraints of matrimony was one of his favorite topics of conversation. "But it is necessary that the couple be well suited to one another." That was a very important point. And love—that was the infallible touchstone. He had some disparaging remarks for those who were married simply for convenience. Without love there was not that sympathetic, almost psychic, understanding, and the conscientious desire to make allowances for the beloved. He himself was a bit strange at times, but that only helped him to understand like-spirited temperaments. But the Baroness would not marry him.

The Colonel had retained his youthful vigor. He could walk faster and farther than most men. He could dance, sing in a quavering falsetto, hold a handkerchief between his hands and jump through it; knew

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something of fencing and was accounted a good swimmer.

True, he would read the life of Buffalo Bill, but that was not strange. He was a South African, a "colonial," as he said. He loved the life of the great out-of-doors: lusty strife with malcontents, midnight rides through dangerous forests. In the biography of his American hero, there was no scene that affected him so much as that in which Colonel Cody's horse was buried at sea. Colonel Babbington could not do otherwise than shed a few tears in honor of that horse. He could understand so well Buffalo's emotion on seeing the remains of his old friend sink into the Atlantic.

The Colonel never forgot his gallant exterior. Even though one suffers one should not give way to depression, should not forget to pin a flower in one's lapel. He was possessed by a fine madness, yes, but that should not be enough to make one forego all thought of himself; to forget to comb his mustache, or to apply a monocle at the right moment.

The Baroness writes letters in her garden. It is a witching place, that garden. There are lemon trees in tubs that exhale an acidulous perfume. There is the voluptuous jasmine, the magnolia and the acacia, and from beyond the orangerie come the monotonous songs of the peasants, singing as they work in the vines among the olive trees, now high, now low, in greater or lesser volume, according to the caprices of the wind.

The Colonel arrives.

"Don't mind me, Baroness."

"Will you forgive me if I finish just this one letter?"

"Please, please."

The Colonel can imagine nothing more intense than sitting there in the cool afternoon shade of the garden, with no sound save the scratching of the pen or, perhaps, the whistle of a bird or the squeaky voice of an insect and the lull of the peasants' songs. As the dimpled hands of the Baroness scribble lines over discreetly tinted paper, he smokes and considers curiously her firm shoulders, her engaging profile, her white throat, and abandons himself to optimistic imaginings. After a while he asks:

"Have you decided, Baroness?"

She smiles.

"Forgive me, my friend, I can't."

The Colonel wants reasons. She tells him that she loves another, one whom she will never see again, but whom she cannot forget. She learns, to her sorrow, that such a fine display of romanticism exalts, rather than cools, the Colonel's ardor.

It is some months since that evening they took their coffee alone on the tower. What an evening! so full of odors, sights, sounds; so luminous, transparent, a tender bluish mist softening the details of the vast panorama. On one side, Fiesole; on the other, Florence. The cicadas chirped lustily in the poplars and elms. The cuckoo awakened and the little downy owl called sorrowfully from the neighboring wood. What a voluptuous odor fumed up from the warm earth, acrid and sweet, along with the soft vehemence of jasmine and magnolia that floated into the brain like a sleepy drug! The moon appeared, blushing on the horizon.

The Baroness was surprised at the vibration of her voice:

"See the moon, Colonel, how beautiful it is."

The Colonel grasped his monocle, lifted it with a dainty gesture, and looked through the little crystal disk at the rose-colored satellite.

Then, one morning, the Baroness, picking flowers in the olive field, heard excited voices in the road that led up to the villa. She climbed stealthily up a slight elevation at the edge of the wall and looked over to discover the Colonel charging an invisible adversary to the death with his malacca stick. The invisible combatant must have been outdone by the Colonel's entry—at any rate the Colonel jabbed the earth several times, making a fury of dust, and cried:

"Die, coward, die!"

Well and what? Better manufacture his enemies than run amuck with the Florentines—and it is hard to see what objection could be made to looking through a monocle at the moon. He could tennis with the best, drink a full half-liter of brandy, recount the exploits of Benvenuto Cellini, walk ten leagues, swim across the Arno. . . . But the Baroness would not marry him.

Christmas Carol

The little waits' song lingers my window-sill below,
Their faint and futile fingers across the lute-strings go,
Their flute-like voices waver with the wind's flow.
"Oh, sing of the Babe of mystery," they say, "this night!"
And of Incarnate Mystery who else than they,
Who have it for their origin, their final end and history
Should sing against the silence of this mysterious night?

They look about upon the dark, they fear the dark and sigh,
They see each tiny home-light's spark, each mother sitting by.
Their hearts grow bold remembering, they lift their voices high.
"Oh, sing to the Queen of Heaven," they say, "this Christmas night!"
And to the Mystic Mother who else should sing than they
Whose whole need and nutrition, whose breath and being, even,
Is love and beauty's leaven and tenderness and light?

The waits they look upon the stars, each face a disk of pearl,
With an aureole no shadow mars of frosty hair awhirl,
With raptured eyes all golden, like eyes of thrush and merle.
"Oh, sing of our King," they say, "on the starry height!"
And of the King of Kings who loves each little child,
Who else should sing than they in hope and ecstasy,
Who else should sing than they in innocence and might?

FLAVIA ROSSER.

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Lancelot J. S. Wood: Citizen of Rome

By F. J. McCORMICK

MORTAL life seems to be only a flash in eternal Rome. The Argentinean light on the Janiculum hill apparently symbolizes it in those breaking bursts of color that cross the swarming hills and the yellow and buff valley. But human lives have always made up the substance of that enduring vitality. And many a person with distinctive genius, whether in the service of the country or the Church, has been content to merge himself in changing phases of Roma immortalis rather than to stand up awhile as a perishable authority. Rome owes a large debt to her unknown saints, scholars and artisans who, dying, have earned a place in her immortal, composite life. Such an honor is not too great for Lancelot J. S. Wood, an English resident of Rome for twenty years, whose untimely death occurred suddenly during the late days of last October.

Mr. Wood, after completing his course at Oxford, developed in England his remarkable gift for straight seeing and clear statement. Later he spent several years in France and finally chose Rome for a permanent residence. Here in the atmosphere of slow, definite solutions he followed the steps of other distinguished members of the Church of England and became a Catholic. He become a sterling, living Catholic—the kind of Catholic that delights the mind of the Church. He knew what his religion was because he had seen it whole from the outside. But having entered the Church his eyes remained open, and when they failed him his never-failing belief carried him endlessly beyond. He distinguished with an effortless sureness between the deficient or delinquent body and a body all-competent to house the religion of Christ. This analyst discussed the human mechanism of the Church with a charitable explicitness that set up its merits or demerits against a background of reasonable possibility. Yet as to the competency of that organized ensemble he had the high, winning faith of a child.

The essayist was already settled in Italy at the time the late Monsignor O'Kelly was publishing Rome, a weekly periodical of exceptional value. A friendship of rare proportions sprang up between the publisher and the Anglican writer who, like Gilbert K. Chesterton, was informally a Catholic long before he was formally received into the Church. The magazine also drew the men together. In Rome which, unfortunately, was discontinued at the death of Monsignor O'Kelly, one found the first rendering in English of official Church documents and arresting Church news; and there was also a column of naïve, savory reflections on bits of history, forgotten churches and other subjects of interest, under the title of Anomalies. These were the product of Lancelot Wood and they deserved the considerable attention which they received. During an interval of illness the Monsignor, having fullest confidence in his friend of the English Church, turned over to him all the responsibilities of a Catholic publication in the most critical of centres.

For the past ten years or so, during which Mr. Wood has been a member of the Church, his work has covered a wide range. On occasions he acted as Roman correspondent of the London Times. But it was as the discriminating reporter of Catholic news, as a convincing essayist and as the safe observer of both governments of Rome, the hurrying and the unhurried, that Lancelot J. S. Wood achieved his reputation.

For a long period he was the outstanding representative in

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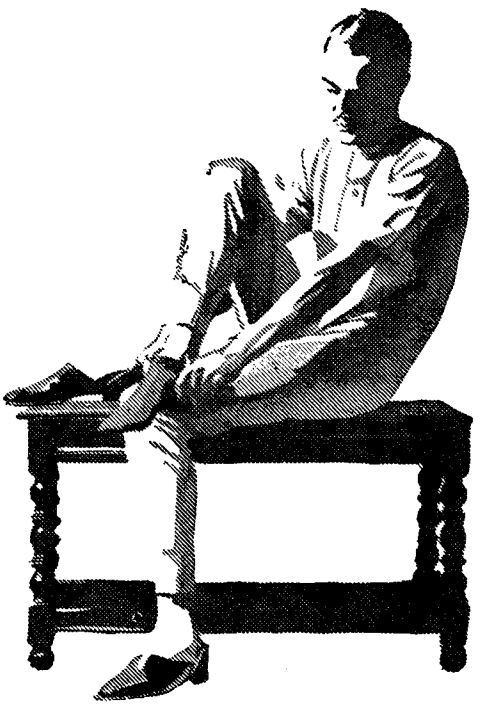

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Rome of the Catholic press in the United States and for many years, up to the time of his death, he contributed his well-known weekly letter to the London Tablet. Recently his articles have been in demand from such international magazines as the Dublin Review, the Catholic World, the Atlantic Monthly, the Forum and The Commonweal. His Italian translations have been extensive and he has been the contributor for Italy to the annual European Year-Book of political history. However, beyond all this Mr. Wood's store of information, learning and shrewd opinion was constantly levied upon by visiting writers and students from England, Ireland, Canada and America. And it was not only fellow-craftsmen who mounted to the hospitable Wood home overlooking the Barberini palace and gardens. One might meet there prelates, priests, friars, diplomats, editors, historians, archaeologists and travelers from everywhere as well as interesting foreign and Italian residents of Rome.

So it was that many points of view met to enrich the wise, mellow views of the host who watched so faithfully and reported so conscientiously from his post on the slope of the Quirinal hill.

If there were problems to solve: the details of a religious question to clarify; an unfortunate in want of help; a stranger to comfort at the hour of death and to bury afterward; an audience to arrange; a story to capture; newcomers to settle or visitors to orientate; the directest way to these ends was a call at the Wood home. How many there are who can give that testimony!

Lancelot J. S. Wood has been substance of the life of Rome. He moved among its old stones, understood its present impatient progress, tactfully touched its thousand sensitive spots, prayed in its shadowy churches and never confused its gossip with its voice. He was a valiant workman of the Lord who felt the duty of performing a hard task with the best human means. If this were inadequate he was not disturbed. The providence of God took direct charge of what remained to be done.

Eternal Rome lives on. The old forum of Augustus has just arisen out of the ground to join other existing works of the Caesars, and Mussolini is opening up wide speedways, for the cumbrous luggage the passing age requires. Yet the quiet spaces keep multiplying, too. Spaces for study, searching, meditating, explaining, growing, loving, governing. It is here the stuff of eternity renews its vitality and from here the Pantheon and Trajan's column borrow their immortality. It is here, too, that scholars and saints like Lancelot J. S. Wood leave something of themselves for the comfort and inspiration of mere itinerant mortals.

You Who Come Seeking

You who come seeking unto Bethlehem,
Hoping to revive and heal a faith that is no more,
Take your lighted taper and pass through the low-hung door
To kneel there in the quietness of that most holy place.

You who come doubting unto Bethlehem,
Searching for some vital proof of what was once your creed,
Look on the hills of Hebron, where shaggy flocks still feed,
And on the fields from whence, that night, the Shepherds saw a star.

You who come questioning to Bethlehem's blessed shrine,
Guard your lighted taper, lest the darkness dim His shrine.

BIRDSALL OTIS EDEY.

COMMUNICATIONS

HOW PROTESTANTS SEE US

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor:—Father Ross's article indicating how our Protestant brethren regard us certainly shocks a Catholic into some serious thinking. I am, I admit, surprised, for I had never supposed that such barriers lay between me and some of my most cherished friends, not of the Faith. However, reviewing in honest restrospect a lifetime of friendships, in the light of Father Ross's findings, I begin to be aware of certain reservations and silences perpetually existent between Catholic and Protestant.

Whether an honest facing of prejudices and hidden fears and misunderstandings can build the mystic bridge across the gap that evidently separates us from those not of the Faith, seems to me a very forlorn question. Of course we ought to get together, as the pioneer group in Connecticut has done, and take stock of our prejudices; but I think we have, most of all, to sort out these prejudices into the intellectual, on the one side; but, on the other side, into the social, racial and emotional.

We shall not, I fear, get far on the road to union until we admit with shame that our dislike of a man's religion is often based on our contempt for his nation or his race or his manners or his business habits. In the questionnaire for use in future truth-telling contests of this sort, I recommend a query or two somewhat as follows:

"Can you name the race or nationality of all those not of your own faith with whom you have definite contacts? Can you name their social status, as compared with yours?"

KATHERINE BYLES.

Providence, R. I.

TO the Editor:—Almost every week I read The Commonweal—often with disagreement, always with profit. I am especially pleased with the article in your issue of November 30 on How Protestants See Us. I wish it might be followed by another article on How Catholics See Protestants. Such discussion promotes both truth and brotherhood.

As one of the Commission on Better Understanding among Catholics, Protestants and Jews, I am giving much thought to the problems that face us all in our crowded American life. The Commonweal by its English style, its realism and its broad horizon merits the attention of thinking Americans.

W. H. P. FAUNCE,
President of Brown University.

FRAGMENTS OF BARDSTOWN HISTORY

Lowell, Mass.

TO the Editor:—In recent issues of The Commonweal there seems to be some misapprehension in reference to the paintings in the old Cathedral in Bardstown, Kentucky. There is no need of any mistake in the matter. Any researcher can find the exact subject matter in Gales and Seaton's Debates in Congress (1832.) On March 19, 1832, the petition of Bishop Flaget asking for a remission of duties on "paintings and church furniture presented by the king of France (Louis Philippe) to the Catholic Bishop of Bardstown, Kentucky" came up in the form of a bill "authorizing the remission of duties" on the paintings and church furniture. The debate brought out an able Protestant defender of Bishop

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Flaget (Representative Charles Wickcliffe of Kentucky) who eloquently set forth the good achieved by the saintly Flaget, and recommended that the bill for the remission of duties be passed. He was seconded by Representative Gulian C. Verplanck of New York. Representative William Hogan of New York (a non-Catholic) uttered the only dissenting voice, and he gave in after hearing the eloquent arguments of Representatives Wickcliffe and Verplanck.

A local paper here this morning garbled the matter by quoting me as writing as to the data on the paintings, when it should have read instead the duties on the paintings. I might state here that I was the individual who dug up the material in the Debates in Congress. My data were forwarded on to St. Louis University, and the leads were followed up in Washington, where an interested researcher found the original petition of Bishop Flaget and had photostats made. These photostats effectually concluded a newspaper controversy in Louisville some months ago.

GEORGE F. O'DWYER.

WHY THE STUDY CLUB?

Pittsburgh, Pa.

TO the Editor:—This communication is intended merely to emphasize and reëcho the statements contained in the letter of Mr. Walter V. Gavigan in The Commonweal for November 16.

Having had personal experience of the benefits of belonging to one of the numerous reading circles advocated and actively promoted in Philadelphia by Monsignor James F. Loughlin, referred to in the list of American Catholic cultural activities in the nineties enumerated by Mr. Gavigan, I cannot remain silent.

It is strange that the memory of such efforts among Catholics (both clergy and laity) to increase knowledge and culture of a worthwhile kind, covering such a range of topics as were included in the suggested lists of the New York Cathedral library circle in which Father MacMillan and Monsignor Joseph H. MacMahon were interested, and the reading circles of Youngstown, Ohio, Chicago, Boston and other cities too numerous to mention with the names of their founders and directors, should have been ignored. Let us hope that it was unintentional, for certainly the mere distinction of the consideration of citizenship and social problems which the new study club proposes does not make them "an innovation," but rather the continuance of an interrupted program among American Catholics.

ANNA C. DANFORTH.

THE IRON HAND IN MEXICO

Webster Groves, Mo.

TO the Editor:—Francis McCullagh's powerful articles on Mexico in The Commonweal give us a picture of a country in a horrible condition. Why do not the readers of The Commonweal write to their senators and congressmen and demand an investigation? The American public appears so indifferent because the true facts are hidden.

CYRIL CLEMENS.

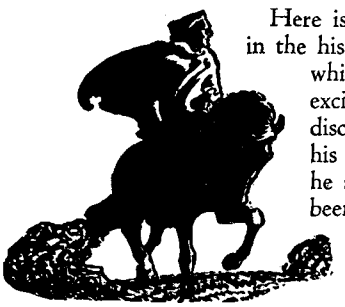
The editor of The Commonweal thanks "A Catholic Lawyer," of San Francisco, for his important letter. He will be obliged if this correspondent will communicate his name and address, in confidence.

Certainly

you will choose to share

DEATH COMES FOR THE ARCHBISHOP

by Willa Cather



Here is one of those books, rare in the history of the modern novel, which fill their reader with excited impulses to share his discovery at once with any of his acquaintance whose taste he specially trusts. That has been the attitude of *The Commonweal*, which greeted the book on its publication with a cordial editorial in addition to Mr. Michael Williams's very long review (ending "I consider it the duty of Catholics to buy and read and spread Willa Cather's masterpiece"), and which later requested from the author a detailed account of how she came to write the book, and published her account (November 23) as a leading article.

It is clear, then, that *Death Comes for the Archbishop* —a non-Catholic book which has gained the unreserved admiration of Catholic readers and writers everywhere— is the ideal holiday remembrance for those of your friends who know that a book is the best of all gifts and to whom you would never dream of offering, among books, anything short of the best. Ostensibly a current novel, it is even doubly welcome to those crusted veteran readers (and they are among the finest) who "don't bother with fiction"; for it is a stirring narrative of the American Southwest in the days of the early missionary priests, and, as such, a beautiful chapter from history of America as well as from that of the Church. So consummate a thing you will find it, as a challenge at once to your best of imagination, mind, and heart, that you will never know whether it is most desirable to read, to keep, or to give—and will end by doing all three.

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THE PLAY

By R. DANA SKINNER

Out of the Sea

IT IS more than curious—it is amazing—that a combination of men so experienced in the theatre as Don Marquis, author, George Tyler, producer, Walter Hampden, director, and Rollo Peters, actor and scenic designer, could bring forth a play so lacking in theatrical vitality and illusion as Out of the Sea. Somewhere in the long processes of rehearsal, the essential weaknesses of the written play should have been discovered and at least partly remedied.

Mr. Marquis has attempted, of course, the well-nigh impossible in trying to contrive one of those stories of reincarnation, in which Isolde and King Mark fulfil their destiny in modern times on a lonely spot on the southwest coast of Cornwall. It takes nothing less than the hand of genius to bestow even theatrical credibility on such a theme, and Mr. Marquis shows by the quality of his lines, which are often trite, and by his arrangement of dramatic incident, which is generally artificial, that he is far from a genius of the theatre. There is no doubt, however, that expert direction and stage setting, plus the judicious use of a blue pencil, could have done much to bring the raw material of this play into a mood and atmosphere of mystery and portent. This is where the combined talents of those responsible have failed.

Mr. Hampden in his direction, for example, has succeeded only in bringing out the most wooden qualities in all of the actors except two. With the exception of the massive Lyn Harding as the reincarnated King Mark, and O. P. Heggie, the actors attack their lines with the dryness of a second-rate Shakespearean repertory company. Then, too, someone has blundered badly in the execution of Rollo Peters's designs for the scenery. One can imagine what these designs must have promised on paper. But when a back drop that should have represented the mystery of a Cornwall sky resembles nothing more than the dull wall of a barn, and when the opening of a cave in the romantic cliffs overhanging Land's End looks like so much ragged and flapping cardboard, it is evident either that the construction studio did a butcher's job, or that Mr. Peters made his designs without relation to the physical requirements of scenic construction and stage lighting.

The story concerns John Marstin, an American poet, who comes to visit his friend, Arthur Logris, on his lonely Cornwall estate. In a storm, the boat of Mark Tregesal is blown ashore, and Mark and his young wife, Isobel, become involuntary visitors at the Logris house. Much mystery hangs about the origin of Isobel who, it seems, was washed from the sea in a small boat as a young girl, was adopted by a man named Timbury, and later, through some curious fascination, became Tregesal's unhappy bride. Marstin falls in love with Isobel. The two conceive of themselves as being reincarnations of Tristan and Isolde, and Mark Tregesal the modern version of King Mark. There is, of course, the all-too-heavily underscored suggestion that this idea is more than a lovers' fantasy, and that Isobel is really a creature of the sea, come forth from the sunken land of Lyonesse. In the end Isobel kills Tregesal, and rather than come to Marstin with blood on her soul, she fulfils what she thinks to be her destiny by leaping back into the sea from which she came.

An excellent list of players battles ineffectually to create a sense of reality for this story. Rollo Peters as Marstin is thin in his emotional quality, and strikes enough poses for a composite portrait of Romeo and Hamlet. Claude Rain has a few good moments as Logris. O. P. Heggie is quite good as the irate and crippled Timbury. But Beatrix Thompson is thoroughly bad as Isobel. Her performance last year as the Constant Nymph is one of those rare and tender memories one cherishes. Since then something dire has happened. It may be nothing worse than Mr. Hampden's direction and some atrocious costuming. One hopes so. Between many posings drawn from Egyptian vases she has a few lucid moments, but not enough to recreate even the rumor of Isolde. The one completely engaging bit of work is Lyn Harding's Mark—a humorous and sardonic portrait. (At the Eltinge Theatre.)

Reinhardt's Everyman

MAX REINHARDT has selected Hugo von Hofmannsthal's version of Everyman for his second American production. It is well calculated, through contrast with A Midsummer Night's Dream, to display Reinhardt's versatility as a showman; it also displays his most conspicuous weakness as an artist. It is, let us say, a much simpler and more impressive production than the one given at the same Century Theatre by Sir John Martin-Harvey. But it falls well short of the Gothic strength of that much older production in which Edith Wynne Mathison first popularized this morality in America.

Reinhardt gives us an odd mixture of stylized and realistic performance. When the friends come to Everyman's feast, they walk in and about with a sort of sublimated goose-step. This does achieve a definite rhythm. But it is soon abandoned for some completely realistic scenes during the banquet itself and later, during Everyman's pleadings with his friends to accompany him on his death journey. The closing scenes, again, are stylized. The combination of the two methods breaks the continuity of feeling and succeeds only in forcing on one's attention the mechanics of certain effects which otherwise would attain a spontaneous beauty.

It is this deliberate forcing of effects, an effort to superimpose spectacle on drama, that constitutes Reinhardt's artistic weakness. He is not content to take the drama as it is and merely heighten it by his mastery of theatrical effects. He seems bent on displaying showmanship for its own sake, as if with the intention of leaving an audience gasping at his power to create abstract beauty. If he could unbend to that extent, he might easily present a Follies far excelling Ziegfeld's. In its proper mood and place, that would be a fine achievement. But in drama, and particularly in a drama as simple and majestic as Everyman, the effect of unrelated showmanship simply leaves one cold.

The cast of Everyman includes all the artists who contributed to the magic of A Midsummer Night's Dream, and chief among them Alexander Moissi of the astonishing voice. Moissi, of course, enjoys to the full the wide inflections permitted by the German language. The same sounding of the scale in English would appear as pure affectation and trick-

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ery. Paul Hartmann, to whom is assigned the Voice of the Lord, in the prologue, apparently tries to outdo Moissi at his own specialty, but succeeds only in rising to a pitch of hysterical shouting. The Thimig brothers do their small parts well, and the lovely Lili Darvas as Faith is pictorially unapproachable. A certain Puritan sternness in her voice rather destroys the ecstatic quality one expects. Maria Solveg is excellent in her early moments as the crippled Good Deeds. But when Faith has restored her strength, she acquires an attitude of devotion toward Everyman more appropriate to an Aloma of the South Seas. The finest moments of the production are the banquet scene, with the unearthly voices summoning Everyman in the midst of his revelries, and the closing tableau. The one setting, fortunately, is a masterpiece of simplicity and dignity. (At the Century Theatre.)

The Centuries

IT WOULD be a very grateful task to say a number of pleasant things about the second production of the new Playwright's Theatre. It is called The Centuries, is written by Em Jo Basshe, and is alleged to be the portrait of a tenement house. Actually it is a study of the retrogression of the Jewish immigrant character in New York. It is full of telling and sharp character studies, it has moments which aspire toward poetic beauty, and every now and then it has an individual scene that catches something of the life of the theatre. But like every play which sets out to prove a thesis, it moves with all the stilted artificiality of a marionette, and like the majority of the newer plays which have completely discarded form, it attempts to do so many things at once that it does no one thing particularly well. The acting in the main is amateurish, the best work being done by Herbert Bergman, Eduard Franz, and Peter Brocco. Sylvia Fenningston might do well if she were not called upon to be a sort of immature Joan of Arc of the shirt-waist industry. The play is performed on one very striking set with many levels by John Dos Passos. (At the Playwright's Theatre.)

The Marquise

NOEL COWARD, who once wrote a stirring play called The Vortex, has written three acts of pretentious and only mildly amusing dialogue concerning the return of a rather indiscreet eighteenth-century lady to a chateau where she discovers herself face to face with the two unacknowledged fathers of her two children. As there is some talk of these two children marrying each other, it appears that the above lady arrived only in time to avert a catastrophe. Billie Burke is the lady in question and Arthur Byron and Reginald Owen are the two fathers. Such comedy as the play affords is exactly the kind of comedy that such a situation would afford in the eyes of a man such as Noel Coward, to whom nothing in life seems to have mattered very much since his indignant explosion in The Vortex. As playwriting, it is a poor example, having little or no suspense. Miss Burke herself, in a series of exuberant costumes, is just what you would expect—utterly charming. Unfortunately, beautiful actresses don't make beautiful plays. (At the Biltmore Theatre.)

The title page and index for Volume VI of The Commonweal are now ready. These will be sent upon request. Arrangements have been made for binding Volume VI in leather or cloth. Information on binding will be given upon application to the offices of The Commonweal.

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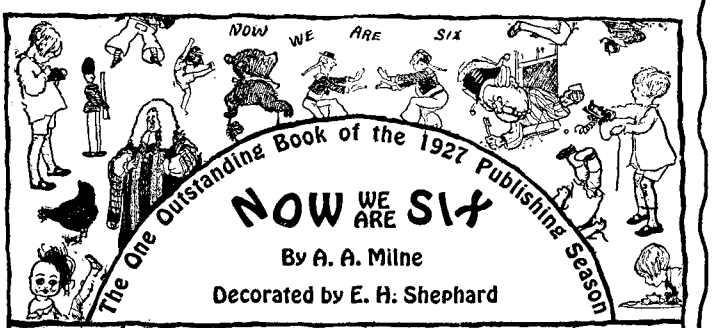

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POEMS FOR CHRISTMASTIDE

From the Sibyl's Book

The scudding cloud has heard in the night
From the fretted forest white with frost,
A glittering Word, a singing Word,
And youth has won and age has lost.

We shall grow young, my soul,
As young as Bethlehem—
Brows bound with fadeless green of holy bay.
The fire dies before the tents of Shem
As sinks the daystar in the blaze of day,
And all the age-old paths, the weary roads,
Are glad with children singing in the way.
The orb of earth runs piping round the sun,
And, like the sky, knows naught of yesterday,
For Jacob's ladder has grown obsolete,
Shepherds can tell. The ancient is undone.
Even the breath of winter is May-sweet,
The stars bow down, earth and the heaven are one.

The scudding cloud has heard in the night
From the fretted forest white with frost,
A glittering Word, a singing Word,
And youth has won and age has lost.

FRANCIS BEAUCHESNE THORNTON.

Mary Walks

In the shadow of every candle
She walks the world tonight—
Every candle in every heart—
Oh, Mary's face is white!

In the shadow of every candle
That every woman knows
Mary walks with the Infant
And the flame grows—grows.

Child in the reeking ghetto,
Child on a snow-still moor,
Shelter your ragged dolly
In the light—clean, pure.

Princess with lily-body
Or slave-girl chained to your color,
Hover the light in the shadow
Where jewels burn duller.

In the shadow of every candle
She walks the world tonight.
And the star comes low, comes lower—
Oh, Mary's face is white!

QUEENE B. LISTER.

The Babe

Who made the heavens of a blue bird's wing?
Who could so tender be?
Who but the Babe Whom we
Hail in our caroling?

Who spilled the starlight in the lap of night?
Who but the Babe Who set
His Mother's coronet
Higher than heaven's height?

Who in His amorous mischief wrought the dawn?
Who but the Babe Who smiled
At shepherds uncouth, wild,
Shy to His cradle drawn?

Who hid the world's magnificence in flowers?
Who but the Babe Who pressed
Warm to His mother's breast
In the stark midnight hours?

DANIEL SARGENT.

Holy Hay

O little humble wonder-flower,
Wearing your badge of that far time
When you first blossomed in the hour
That summoned you with silver chime
To undreamed beauty. How could you know
Little Lord Jesus was calling low?

No silken coverlet wrapped Him round,
No downy pillow eased His head,
Sun-dried herbs and grass unbound
Made a nest of the manger bed,
And you—a tiny thing hidden there—
Crept close and touched His radiant hair.

Barren you were, with never a bloom,
Then lo! along your quickened stem
Rosy-hued buds leapt forth in the room,
One with the joy of Bethlehem—
And sheep and kine stirred with glad surprise,
But Love lit a star in Jesus' eyes.

IMOGEN CLARK.

Vigil Lights

Make my heart a vigil light,
With its flickering spark
Dimly heralding the Sun
When the room is dark.

MARIE SCHULTE KALLENBACH.

The Nativity

Eternity and time are one,
Infinity is joined to space—
The firefly glows beside the sun;
One Baby hides the human race.

RICHARD LINN EDSALL.

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BOOKS

Faith and Ferocity

Roman Society in Gaul in the Merovingian Age, by Sir Samuel Dill. New York: The Macmillan Company. $7.50.

THE late Sir Samuel Dill has left in this book a lively picture of western Europe at the moment when the strong hand of Rome was palsied and the empire over which it had held sway was slowly passing from central to local control, always, however, on Roman lines and usually under Romanized governors. For, though barbarian leaders overran the land, they had immense respect for Roman traditions, used Roman titles in many cases, and employed Roman officials.

But even more the interest of his book lies in the early struggles of the still infant Church with Arianism. It was absolutely true, as the author says, that "it was a question whether the future of western Europe should belong to the German conquerors who had accepted the faith of Nicaea or to those who rejected it." The Vandals and the Goths were all Arians, and fierce and cruel persecutors of Catholics. There was one branch of the Teutonic races, however, the Franks, which was not Arianized and still held to the worship of Odin. To the infant Church it was of enormous importance what these people who had overrun France, would do. Clovis, their king, was married to Clothilde, the second daughter of Chilperic II of Burgundy who, with her sister Chrona (afterward a nun) was devoutly Catholic among Arian surroundings. Clovis was engaged in death grips with the Alemanni, another Teuton horde and prior to the battle of Tolbiacum he swore that, if he conquered, he would follow the religion of Remigius, then Bishop of Rheims. This he did, with half his troops, after gaining the victory in 496.

It was the turning-point in the religious struggle and here one is reminded again of the enormous importance of the royal women of this period. A large part of the book is occupied by the struggles of Fredegundis and Brunhildis. The latter was at least a model of domestic virtue. She attacked Fredegundis, who was little better than a prostitute, because the latter had caused her paramour to have Galswintha, sister of Brunhildis and his wife, strangled in order to make possible a regular union between the guilty couple. In the end Fredegundis died in her bed—a fate which she did not deserve. The unhappy and much less guilty Brunhildis, when an old woman, was captured by her brutal foes and torn limb from limb. It is a good example of the "frightfulness" of these early Teutons—one of the difficulties which the early Church had to contend with.

For the Church was now seated in the place of authority which had been occupied by the empire. Its bishops were likewise the most important civic and provincial authorities. Of course the power which they exercised made the episcopal chair a thing to be envied and striven for and, as a result, some of the bishops were thoroughly vile and wicked men, like Egidius, Archbishop of Rheims. But on the other hand we have a number brought before us who, for saintliness and courage—and both were required when the bishop had to deal with Merovingian kings and queens—are second to none in the history of the Church. Witness Gregory of Tours, to whom an entire chapter is devoted, Nicetus, Felix and many another. And such were required for the Church had a legion of enemies.

There were the Arians to begin with, and the kings and

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HARVARD COLLEGE

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rulers, whether Arian or nominally Catholic. Even the best of them were scarcely the types which we should associate with sanctity. In the main they were a brutal lot; and as to oaths and treaties sworn at the altar, they thought even less of them than later rulers have been known to think of "scraps of paper." Yet in time the Church overcame this difficulty as it did the ever-recurring relapses into paganism on the part of the people. Everything was done to make the escape from paganism to Christianity as little difficult as possible, but there were many things which could neither be Christianized nor tolerated.

Another and minor difficulty was met with in the religious houses, if one may call them so. It was a period when myriads seem to have been called to a religious life, often from royal courts and noble houses. Such men simply went out into the forests, made some rough place of habitation and gave themselves up to prayer and meditation. Others flocked to them; a community grew up of laymen who heard Mass at some neighboring church; who had such rule as they themselves drew up with no episcopal, still less papal, sanction. In time they began to have chaplains but great difficulties occurred here and by degrees it came about that one or more of the brethren received holy orders. Here arose another difficulty in regard to the position of the bishop to the houses. It was some time before these things could be straightened out, still longer before the beneficent rule of Saint Benedict could transform monasticism into the wonderful agency for civilization which it became, as all now recognize.

In the nature of things, of course, grave scandals arose under these lax conditions and what a scale such scandals could reach anyone can learn who reads the tale of the pious Queen Radegund and the Convent of Holy Cross, which she built and endowed, and which fell into such appalling wickednesses after her death.

One could go on almost forever discussing the points of interest in this book but an end must be made and this last word said. Sir Samuel, a scholar of great erudition and unfailing urbanity, was a man of utter fairness of mind. But he quite clearly and obviously did not understand the Church and her teachings, and perhaps it may be claimed that a life's residence in Belfast did not assist him in gaining that viewpoint which he himself would most have desired, since his cardinal object was to be fair to all. Consider what ignorance of the teaching of the Church, today and yesterday, the following statement displays. It is but one example of numerous misconceptions against which, it is fair to say, there may be set many acknowledgements of the great characteristics and services to civilization of the Church.

"The mass of men [he writes of the Merovingian days] were still pagan in the sense that they still believed that a multitude of unseen powers were working under all the phenomena of life and nature, that demons floated round the life of men, and that a man of rare sanctity could in life, or from his tomb, work wonders as marvelous as his sanctity."

It is true that we do not think of spiritual influences as underlying all the operations of nature as was a possible explanation in pre-scientific days. But otherwise the beliefs of those days do not differ from ours and in no sense can they be called pagan or of pagan origin.

We think it right to note this point, but conclude by saying that this volume will stand beside its two great predecessors as instancing how a historian of genius can make the ordinary life of a past age live again for his readers.

BERTRAM C. A. WINDLE.

The Chained Eagle

Napoleon in Captivity: Reports and Letters of Count Balmain, Russian Commissioner at St. Helena during the Years 1816-1820; translated and edited by Julian Park. New York: The Century Company. $3.00.

THIS is a particularly interesting book, and the English reading public ought to be very grateful to the translator for the trouble he has taken to make it accessible to those who had not had the opportunity to see the French original. It is interesting because, although it tells us nothing new in regard to the drama of the exile of the great conqueror who was to end his days on that dreary rock amid the ocean, although it stops about twelve months before Napoleon's death, yet it throws a far more human light than has yet been thrown on the different characters of the actors in this tragedy.

Count Balmain, the author of the letters and reports which compose this volume, was perhaps the most humane and certainly the most intelligent among the foreign commissioners who had been sent to St. Helena to watch, not so much over the dethroned emperor as over his jailers. In addition to these qualities he was an excellent observer, which neither his French nor his Austrian colleague could boast of being. And he could differentiate between what was the truth and the numerous exaggerations of the different reports which reached him from Sir Hudson Lowe as well as from the French companions of the emperor's captivity. He sums up admirably the peculiarities of temperament and character of these different personages, and the picture he draws of them is as vivid as it is, in the main, impartial.

Out of Balmain's reports we can come to a far more just appreciation of the curious individuality of Sir Hudson Lowe than from any of the numerous books published until now on the subject of the sayings and doings of the inhabitants of St. Helena. Out of them we can reconstitute the character of this much-discussed personage. He appears to us if not more sympathetic, at least not as repulsive as he is generally represented to have been. It is certain that his position was far from being either easy or pleasant, and that there was much to harass him in the many difficulties which were constantly thrown in his path. On the other hand, he was certainly too suspicious, and exaggerated to an almost ridiculous degree the smallest incident connected with the house hold at Longwood. He was haunted by the fear that Napoleon might escape, and this was partly the reason why he insisted that precautions be taken in regard to the emperor's slightest movements which could only irritate the latter, and which really were absolutely unnecessary.

Count Balmain sums up this fact in one of his reports in which he writes: "If I were charged with guarding Bonaparte, the entire island would be his domain. By day, I would submit him to no direct surveillance. I would post all my guards on the coasts. The pleasure of walking would be infinitely increased, since no soldiers would be seen, nor anything that can sadden or humiliate a prisoner. In the evening I would establish at rifle range from Longwood a cordon of troops which nobody would pass without my knowledge. Any other measure of security in the interior of the island is useless and vexatious. The essential point about this rock, which is unapproachable and is only ten leagues in circumference, is to guard the coasts and the sea."

And yet, in spite of this criticism of the governor, one can see that Balmain realizes the difficulties of his position and

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the vexations which he, as well as the emperor, has to endure, owing to the anomaly of their respective positions. It is to be doubted, in view of the character and attitude of Napoleon, whether there would have been found in the whole of the world a man who would have won his sympathies, if entrusted with the responsibility of guarding him in his exile. But on the other hand it is certain that Sir Hudson Lowe might, had he liked, have taken much out of the sting of his captivity, instead of, so to say, rubbing in every day the fact that the man who had commanded millions of human beings was now at his mercy, obliged in his turn to obey after having ruled the whole of Europe.

It is this struggle between two strong wills which is so cleverly and so vividly related in the reports of Count Balmain, covering the four years he spent at St. Helena. They present to us beings passionately and intensely human. It is this side of the captivity at St. Helena which has been overlooked in all the other descriptions we have read of it; even Lord Rosebery, in his Last Phase, was too impressed by the grandeur of his subject to treat it otherwise than from a grand point of view. Count Balmain speaks of the man, and it is the man he paints for us in this book in his appreciations of both Napoleon and Sir Hudson Lowe.

CATHERINE RADZIWILL.

Fiction's Good Fairy

The Romantick Lady: The Story of an Imagination, by Vivian Burnett. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. $3.50.

SHE was called "Fluffy" by her friends, but "Dearest" by her children; and, books aside, that is not so far from summing up the personality of Frances Hodgson Burnett. One feels that this chatty, intimate, highly sentimental and copiously illustrated biography—built up largely from her own words by the son who had been quondam model for Little Lord Fauntleroy, and stressing all the strength and none of the weakness of a character quite obviously made up of both—is precisely the sort she would best have liked to follow her. It is also precisely the sort her surviving admirers would best like to read. And after all, it would be rather cruel to turn a cool, judicial light upon one who seems consistently and from childhood to have romanticized and dramatized her own life; seeing herself as a kind of glamourous, beneficient fairy in her early poverty and later affluence—in her affections and doubtless, since fairies have never been inclined toward domesticity, in her disappointment—making the most of an almost spectacular literary vogue, yet insisting that her sincerest joy lay in the rôle of fairy mother to her two boys, supplemented eventually by the rôles of fairy mother-in-law and fairy grandmother. "Her fictions were always so pleasant, usually so much a matter of herself alone, that few ever thought of disturbing them, or had the unkindness to try," writes Vivian, still under the spell of the maternal imagination.

And there was matter for romance in the story of the young Fanny Hodgson, born in Manchester, England, but early transplanted by a fatherless and impoverished family to Tennessee; teaching a tiny village school there in the dark aftermath of the Civil War; beginning rather hectically to write stories for Godey's Lady's Book; and just as the first wave of literary popularity came rolling in, marrying the devoted young neighbor and doctor, Swan Burnett. Soon came the babies; later, fame and wealth, overwork and ill-

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ness, much wandering to and fro upon the earth—and the death of her dearly loved elder boy, Lionel. Then for a while she was perhaps the best-known woman novelist and dramatist of her day, the friend of everyone who was anyone, presiding over her beautiful English home and garden like a queen on the edge of Bohemia. And for another while, during the long fight against invalidism, she was slipping quietly back to what remained of her still devoted family, and further and further from the taste of a generation which had already begun to forget That Lass O' Lowries, the irreproachable Fauntleroy, and even the Lady of Quality.

There were less appealing if not less characteristic sides to this sentimental journey—the divorce from that patient husband she had outgrown, who in this "as in everything else" yielded to her wish; the stormy and short-lived episode of her second marriage; the somewhat pathetic dippings into Christian Science, spiritism and various other cults which might hope to supplement her own rather nebulous "religion of kindness." Her life and work, too, were a bundle of emotions. But that quick sense of dramatic values, that delight in feeling for its own sake, played their potent part in her literary achievement. Mrs. Burnett had a real gift for creative fiction—precisely the kind of sentimental fiction adored by the contemporaries of her youth and middle life; and having found what her public liked, she produced it with admirable industry and enormous success. Only, being an incorrigibly Romantick Lady, she preferred thinking of herself as if she were a fairy godmother trying to "write more happiness into the world."

KATHERINE BRÉGY.

The Dead, Dead Days

My Pious Friends and Drunken Companions, edited by Frank Shay and illustrated by John Held, jr. New York: The Macauley Company. $2.00.

THERE have been several anthologies of drinking songs, one of which reprehensible volumes (I blush to say) was compiled by myself; but I think that nobody has so far attempted what Mr. Shay has done—the bringing together of an assortment of the ditties males sang at that stage in the proceedings when they had drunk just enough to make them feel the need of warbling in the midnight air. I say "sang" rather than "sing," because modern souse-parties are bi-sexual and sad. I have never known anyone to sing even Sweet Adeline on synthetic gin. It is wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and beer that best lubricates the vocal chords.

In the dear dead days, the days that are no more, drinking songs were very rarely sung. The jovial topers liked something melancholy, and something with a great number of verses. Men actually consuming good drink do not sing about it. For the fount of song is the memory of departed joy and the desire of the unattained. The poet with a barrel of wine in his cellar can go down and turn the handle of the spigot; and when he can drink it he has no need to write about it. The proof of this? An admirable custom gives the poet laureate an annual butt of wine; but no poet laureate has ever written a drinking song. If some reader should be able to produce such a drinking song in order to confute me, I will undertake to show, by further learned researches among the archives at Windsor Castle, the Tower of London, the British Museum, or wherever they keep the important documents in question, that it was written after the laureate had drained his barrel dry and had begun to wonder if a movement could not be started to amend the Constitution in such a way as to get a barrel of wine rolled into his cellar every six months.

Mr. Shay therefore omits practically all drinking songs proper, and such as are included appear as it were by accident. "The modern minnesingers," he says, "Belloc, Masefield and Maynard sing, for the most part, of beer and skittles and sometimes they attempt to celebrate the virtues of the lowly cider. The honest and simple reveler much prefers the sentimental and melancholy ballads."

The songs in this book are, in the vast majority of cases, not to be found in print elsewhere, and Mr. Shay has performed a great service in collecting them. Several, such as Frankie and Johnnie, and Mademoiselle from Armentières, have been, of necessity, expurgated; but enough remains to enjoy—especially as Mr. Shay gives the music.

I think that my favorite pieces in this collection are Lydia Pinkham and She was Just a Parson's Daughter, with its glorious refrain (slightly different from the version my nurse taught me)

"It's the syme the 'ole world over,
It's the poor what tikes the blime;
It's the rich what gets the grivy,
Ayn't it all a bleedin' shime?"

Other old favorites which, according to the canon, ought to have been included are Christmas Day in the Workhouse. Another Little Drop Won't Do Us Any Harm, the Ballad of Dives and Lazarus, and the song upon the myth that beer is poison—

"I've drunk barrels and barrels and barrels,
And it hasn't poisoned me."

But as More Pious Friends and Drunken Companions is, I hear, in process of compilation, perhaps these will yet attain the permanence of print.

John Held, jr., has copiously illustrated the book with wood-cuts. Some of these are very funny, notably The Rum Runner's Sister-in-Law, The Drunkard's Wife, The Curse of the Opera House, and The Bootlegger's Bride.

May the book have the best of luck! I do not doubt that it will cause many attempts to recapture the fine mellow spirit of the past; but I doubt the success of those attempts. Drinking under prohibition has become too serious.

THEODORE MAYNARD.

Melody's Golden Age

The Schumanns and Johannes Brahms, by Eugenie Schumann. New York: The Dial Press. $4.00.

EUGENIE, daughter of the greatest poet of the romantic school of music and of the woman who practically devoted her life to spreading appreciation of his works as a concert pianist, is the author of this intimate book of reminiscence. The publisher declares on the jacket that "there have been many conjectures regarding the nature of the friendship between Clara Schumann and Johannes Brahms," but the statement is one which should be taken with a grain of salt. It is certain that no "conjectures" deserving attention—quite aside from Eugenie Schumann's evidence—ever have cast doubt on the lofty ideality of the friendship.

These memoirs of Eugenie Schumann are, in fact, the intimate story of Clara Schumann's life with numerous reveal-

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ing sidelights on Brahms, his character, personality and musical ideals. And throughout we find portraits and recollections of the great in music during that fruitful second half of the nineteenth century: Wagner, Hermann Levi, his great conductor; Pauline Viardot, Stockhausen, Joachim and Piatti. The book appeals because of a certain unpretentious sincerity, and an obvious pleasure, devoid of affectation of any kind, in recalling what was truly a golden past in the writer's life.

Nor does the writer wield a professional pen. As she artlessly says, "When I began to write these memoirs. . . I am not sure that I had publication in view; I felt constrained to say how things had really been, and I started to write. One word led to another, one remembrance called forth a thousand. I wrote for the pleasure of writing; I surveyed my life and lingered where I listed. The longer I wrote, the more it was my mother's personality which became the prominent one."

And Eugenie Schumann has been successful in expressing what she sought to express. As a reflection of a musical circle which included in its happy, cultured ring the man who may still be called the greatest musical architect since Beethoven, and equally as a picture of moeurs intimes, it cannot fail to win friends.

FREDERICK H. MARTENS.

Faith of Our Fathers

The Faith of the Roman Church, by C. C. Martindale. New York: George H. Doran Company. $2.00.

FOR most people it would be as difficult to give an exposition of that inner belief which sways the soul as it would be for the lover or the artist to portray or paint the entrancing vision of the Christ which dwells within the heart. The task, however, seems to hold no terror for the author of this little book, and strange to say his success is characterized by the most unconscious ease. He is possessed of a very real and living faith engendered, no doubt, by love and by what he ventures to call his "evangelical background," wherein God and sin were taken for granted, and divine justice and Christly love were essential bases of life. Just as clearly, it is the fruit of the logical reasoning, for Catholic belief includes a core of reason. It is emphatically not an affair of sentiment and still less a leap in the dark or a blind acceptance of God by reason of the fact that one must make a start somewhere. Wisely enough the author makes a beginning with a cogent discussion of the intellectual foundations of his faith, and proceeds to a sympathetic exposition of Catholic doctrine as it has "pervaded and formed history, and as it energizes our present world."

No one within the confines of the Church today is better versed than Father Martindale in the vagaries of modern thought. While his book is an expression of his individual beliefs, he also discusses modern concepts and modern thought—sometimes with considerable annoyance, sometimes with no little amusement.

In the presentation of his arguments Father Martindale quite readily agrees that argumentation is not always productive of faith. Yet we venture to say that what he calls his "simple philosophy" will do much in engendering faith. We search high and low sometimes for a book to give an occasional friend who still gropes blindly amid the encircling gloom. It might be well for us to have this little volume at hand.

PETER E. HOEY.

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Briefer Mention

The Life of William the Conqueror, by Sarah Henry Benton. New York: The Dial Press. $3.50.

IN HONOR of the nine-hundredth anniversary of the birth of William the Conqueror, Sarah Henry Benton has compiled a readable and accurate biography. She leads her hero from the cradle to the grave, affording glimpses of his personality and family life, but stressing the great martial and legislative exploits in chapters that are very much like deftly executed canvases. William was a great mediaeval figure who wears an aspect of true nobility when judged by the standards of his own time. Through the conquest of England he exercised such an influence upon the development of our proper civilization that it is really surprising how little is commonly known of him. Many readers of the present volume will, however, especially appreciate Mathilde, William's good and charitable wife, whose portrait is traced with great love. Mrs. Benton's work is derivative from a competently assembled and digested bibliography, so that even meticulous students of history will appreciate its value. The publishers have supplied numerous interesting illustrations and an excellent format.

Yellow Gentians and Blue, by Zona Gale. New York: D. Appleton and Company. $2.00.

ZONA GALE is a conscientious, skilful, widely read novelist. One feels, however, that she has been most successful in that unusually brief short-story form of which the present volume affords many good illustrations. Years ago Miss Gale won a prize for a story in this genre in one of the few magazine competitions one remembers with any interest or pleasure. Since then her art has mellowed and acquired the grace of unlimited suggestiveness—the Chekhov virtue, to put the matter more clearly. This new collection proves the ability of an American artist to derive poignancy and a delicate poetic insight from the contemplation of native scenes. Stories like Charivari and The Blue Velvet Gown will surely be considered classics of their kind. But before they are studied they deserve to be read; and the reading will be pleasant, even though some may find more than they like of that "statuesque woe" which is apparently the open sesame to collections like those made annually by Mr. O'Brien.

A History of the Cuban Republic, by Charles E. Chapman. New York: The Macmillan Company. $5.00.

THE author approaches the task of his Cuban history with the preliminary studies that he has devoted to his earlier volumes, A History of California, The Spanish Period and A History of Spain. He has lived much in Spain and South America as well as Cuba, and his knowledge of Hispanic ideals has become adequate to the rather difficult task of presenting the Cuban question in its proper light. The modern Cuban, owing his independence largely to the favoring influences of North America, finds certain difficulties in the terms of the Platt Amendment and the suspicion of imperialism in the business administration of the United States. A small country adjacent to a powerful neighbor must maintain a constant vigilance which need not, and in the case of our Cuban cousins, does not, imply any lack of affection or sympathy. Dr. Chapman's book in its handling of details of social life as well as political and economic affairs is a highly commendable work.

THE QUIET CORNER

I counsel thee, shut not thy heart nor thy library.—C. Lamb.

"When a certain ancient authority declared vigorously, 'Go to the ant, thou sluggard,' he—quite unintentionally, perhaps—gave a prophetic indication of that animalism which is growing so popular among our modern professors of science, followers of the Darwinian brotherhood, whose older theories on the descent of man from the gorilla are proving all too limited. Indeed, at present the question of a family tree for the gorilla assumes an appalling importance, and the biologist is becoming as busy with his germ and protoplasm as the anatomist with his Neanderthal man. Some pretty magic-lantern slides are in process of development for next year's lecture courses, as we may infer from Dr. Eugene G. Wiseman's speech to the American Academy of Optometry. He says, 'In man's development from the lower species, the eyes had gradually come to the front from their position at the side of the head, as in the fish, and with this had come a great improvement—parallel vision of both eyes. But naturally this recently acquired binocular single vision possessed the incompleteness of most new mechanisms.' "

"So that 'Drink to me only with thine eyes' came to be an invitation to one drink instead of the two of our hospitable forbears," interrupted Britannicus, developing a frivolous strain in preparation for his Christmas parties.

But Dr. Angelicus was not to be withdrawn from the serious study he was pursuing. "'We have found'," he continued to read from Dr. Wiseman, "'that a great proportion of cases of myopia are caused by the fact that the eyes naturally diverge to the right and to the left instead of looking straight ahead.' I have noticed this peculiarity in the glances of my favorite goldfish, Minnie, as she steers toward the cracker crumbs upon which I nourish her daily. In her polished globe the little darling seems quite without a knowledge of distance, seeing the way she butts her pretty snout against the glass. I am afraid that her limited field now at her disposal may affect her health badly. The poor thing's melancholy seems to be growing chronic, especially when I note the vivacity of Fritz, my favorite grey squirrel, after he has whirled himself half the afternoon in the revolving wheel attached to his cage.

"These scientists would have been hailed as brothers by the old fabulists, the Sanskrit Pilpai, the Arab Lokman, the Greek Aesop, the Latin Phaedrus, the French La Fontaine and Florian, the German Gellert, the Spanish Yriarte and the Russian Krylov—not to mention dear old Joel Chandler Harris, whose animalistic studies carry over to our native land the dreams and subconscious yearnings of an ageless Africa."

Here Britannicus drew a long breath. Doctor Angelicus eyed him a bit suspiciously and then continued: "Just listen to what Dr. William M. Patterson of Columbia University told the American Psychological Association the other evening: 'Contrary to popular belief, a bird does not sing a little song when it opens its beak. Instead it makes a little speech—' "

"Some of these birds must have been on our after-dinner program last night," murmured Britannicus under his breath.

" 'These speeches are not a repetition of the same word time after time, either. Sometimes this little African finch that I have been observing will say a word and then he will not use it again for a week. The bird builds up his words very

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much as the Hopi Indians in this country have built up theirs.' Another point is that the bird speaks in prose that is comparable to Sanscrit, Chinese, the Hopi speech and English.

"The recording of the various sounds that compose the bird's alphabet has been done entirely by ear (that is, dear Britannicus, the professor's own ear) since mechanical methods will not record the fine differences in pitch of the various notes the bird uses. So that, after all, it is just another one of those articles of faith proclaimed by yesterday's scientists urbi et orbi. Thank goodness, Britannicus, my canaries have all lost their voices; even Panjamdrum, my tropical macaw, has not uttered a sound for years. I love them for their colors, their movements and the unfailing way in which they devour my birdseeds and soda biscuits; but the first duty of a pet is to be silent—this is the old, gold quality that makes Minnie so dear to me in spite of her distended oglings.

"I have had several of my former bird-pets beautifully taxidermized, but then, as you know, Britannicus, I suffer from the passion for eternities. I am not so successful with my former briny and fresh-water pets, whom I have had varnished and nailed to boards. The dear old scales will break off in spite of all the warnings I have given Asmodeus, my colored man, who wields a vicious duster. In fact, half of my holidays are spent with a glue-pot replacing the plumes, fins and scales that are knocked off my unprotesting darlings by this negroid vacuum cleaner.

"Still our gargoyles are safe on the upper buttresses: let the worm sing Noël as well as the angel. Let the birds make their after-dinner speeches, and the gold-fish blink to the right or left, or straight ahead, if they can. We are all creatures in His hands, and you and I, Britannicus, can see as far as our noses and eye-glasses permit. In fancy I turn to the tinsel fish and gilt birdlings on our old Christmas tree. How little did we dream that the professors would ever ally us so closely, in this curious sort of modern Franciscanism, with our brothers and sisters of the watery depths and cerulean spaces!"

—THE LIBRARIAN.

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